THE Nation

AMERICA'S LEADING LIBERAL WEEKLY SINCE 1865

VOLUME 164 NEW YORK • SATURDAY • MAY 31, 1947 NUMBER 22

# The Shape of Things

THE MOST URGENT QUESTION BEFORE THE Palestine Commission, meeting this week at Lake Success, is whether or not to visit the displaced-persons camps in Europe as part of its inquiry. The need of going there would seem self-evident, but the violent protests of the Arab representatives have created a political issue where none should have existed. Only the most narrow legalistic view of the Palestine problem would exclude the wishes and plight of the remaining Jews in Europe, particularly those without homes or nationality. The situation in the detention camps becomes more critical every month, with a new spirit of resentment and disillusionment developing among the D. P.'s. British efforts to check at its various European sources the stream of refugees moving toward Palestine, have aggravated conditions still further. In next week's issue, we shall publish a report of a recent visit to the camps by an American correspondent, Marie Syrkin. No one reading the facts she gives could fail to realize the inescapable relationship between the survival of the Jewish people and the development of a Jewish Palestine. It is this realization that the Arabs are shrewdly trying to prevent.

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A FULL-DRESS DEBATE ON FOREIGN POLICY is scheduled for next week's British Labor Party conference at Margate. The revolt of the backbenchers led by Richard Crossman and Michael Foot has not subsided. This group's recently published "Keep Left" restates the case against the Bevin foreign policy and calls for drastic curtailments of Britain's foreign commitments that tie up in the armed forces hundreds of thousands of men who are badly needed in home industries. Undoubtedly, the Truman Doctrine has increased the internal party dissent. A natural reluctance to be bound to America's doubtful economic fortunes has been converted into a determination to separate Britain from involvement in what is generally interpreted as America's imperialist adventure. Even if Mr. Bevin has not seen as great a light as Aylmer Vallance suggests on page 651, the government is evidently disturbed both by criticism and by the march of events. A Labor Party pamphlet issued last Friday under the title "Cards on the Table" anticipates the Margate debate. It is at once a defense of past British policy and a declaration of independence from American economic dominance and Soviet political pressure. The frank criticisms of "Russian encroachment" and the crippling Soviet tactics in the United Nations is balanced by a cool analysis of America's post-war role—"she was both unwilling and unable to shoulder the responsibility of this immense power." The statement concedes Britain's necessarily close economic ties with the United States but "does not propose to take sides in a line-up for the next world war." By choosing a middle ground on which to fight, the government has robbed the rebels of a little of their thunder. But perhaps the pamphlet means more. Perhaps it is a harbinger of a new British foreign policy which it is not politically expedient to define with any degree of clarity. In any case, we eagerly look forward to the report on Margate which Mr. Vallance will cable for next week's *Nation*.

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WHEN SOUTHERN FILIBUSTERERS PREVENT the passage of anti-lynching legislation, they always do so in the sacred name of states' rights. The states are dealing with the problem, they say, and progress is being made. Federal intervention would spoil everything and set the cause of justice back by decades. After what happened in Greenville, South Carolina, last week this approach should prove too brassy for even a Bilbo. Here were twenty-eight men convicting themselves and each other in written confessions; here was an excellent and able prosecutor, with all the evidence a prosecutor could desire; here was a courageous and impartial judge. But here was one thing more—a local white jury. All twenty-eight were acquitted. This is no question, then, of perverted officials, poll-tax politics, or any of those other simple phenomena by which glib Northerners explain the South and for which they offer equally simple solutions. The defendants are local heroes. Among the defense attorneys, moreover, was a local C. I. O. counsel, a man considered one of the town's liberals; yet his courtroom behavior was as rabid as his colleagues'. And several of the acquitted lynchers plan to run for public office—probably for sheriff. Clearly, then, the lynching was not an aberration but an expression of the spirit of Greenville. It will take years of slow social change to alter that spirit. But in the meantime what of the potential victims of lynch law? They are citizens of the country

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## : IN THIS ISSUE :

EDITORIALS

The Shape of Things 643
Planning or Starvation 645
Dollars vs. Communism *by Freda Kirchwey* 646
Letter from Bilbao 647

ARTICLES

Atomic Energy for the Millions *by Leonard Engel* 648
One Country: Equal Rights *by Ellis Arnall* 650
Ernest Bevin's Great Light *by Aylmer Vallance* 651
India Drifts Toward Civil War *by Shiva Rao* 653
Dixie in Black and White. V. Big Push Against the Valley *by A. G. Mezerik* 655
Perón on the March *by Del Vayo* 658
Everybody's Business *by Keith Hutchison* 659

BOOKS AND THE ARTS

Dialogue of a Dilemma *by Rustem Vambery* 660
An Epic Game *by Marvin Lowenthal* 661
The Human Story *by Elizabeth Wilder* 663
Art *by Clement Greenberg* 664
Films *by James Agee* 665
Music *by B. H. Haggin* 667

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS 668

CROSSWORD PUZZLE No. 214 *by Jack Barrett* 669

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*The Nation*, published weekly and copyrighted, 1947, in the U. S. A. by The Nation Associates, Inc., 20 Vesey St., New York 7, N. Y. Entered as second-class matter, December 13, 1879, at the Post Office of New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Advertising and Circulation Representative for Continental Europe: Publicitas, Lausanne, Switzerland.

*Subscription Prices: Domestic*—One year $6; Two years $10; Three years $14. Additional postage per year: Foreign and Canadian $1.

*Change of Address:* Three weeks' notice is required for change of address, which cannot be made without the old address as well as the new one.

*Information to Libraries: The Nation* is indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, Index to Labor Articles, Public Affairs Information Service, Dramatic Index.

and entitled to its protection. Since the state is unable to assure that protection, the federal government must. Federal courts are able to draw on jury panels covering a much wider area than state courts and can thus escape in some measure the effects of local feeling. But federal civil-rights statutes will have to be greatly strengthened before the Greenvilles of the South will learn that they are part of the United States.

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THE SENATE'S SUPPOSEDLY "MODERATE" anti-labor bill will probably be on the President's desk by the time this comment appears in print. Its moderation, of course, is merely relative, and can be seen only when it is placed against the measure originally passed by the House—the kind of moderation that characterizes hanging as compared with boiling in oil. The President, we earnestly hope, will not allow himself to be taken in by a brazen campaign now raging in the press to make the bad look good by contrast with the worst. The fact is that the Senate version, to which the House will in all likelihood give its assent, is one of the most dangerously drawn bills ever to be offered for a President's signature. The danger lies in its deviousness. Killing the closed shop outright, for example, it pretends to compensate by upholding the union shop, but the right to this form of security is so fenced about with provisos that in practice it would soon be meaningless. Indeed, the entire process of collective bargaining, which the bill piously defends in the abstract, would be made enormously difficult by provisions for hectoring the unions and denying them recognition for a variety of frivolous and implausible reasons, while making their internal disruption a progressive certainty. The President will enhance his prestige enormously if he accompanies his veto with a message that clearly and soberly exposes the bill as the hypocrisy it is—a piece of class legislation that pretends to correct abuses but is coolly calculated to destroy the nation's trade-union movement.

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HAROLD E. STASSEN IS THE LATEST OF A varied assortment of advocates of a comprehensive, long-term foreign-loan program for building "worldwide peace and plenty and freedom." An analysis of current trade figures by Keith Hutchison which appears on page 659 shows how urgent has become action on these lines if we are to avoid an export slump that will be disastrous to us and our foreign customers alike. Mr. Stassen's recent tour of devastated Europe has evidently convinced him that the job of reconstruction to be done cannot be tackled by grudging dribblets of assistance. His bold proposal is that 10 per cent of net American production for the next ten years be allocated to a program of reconstruction and development. That would mean something between $15 and $20 billion annually. Unfortunately,

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the value of this plan is destroyed by some of the conditions which Mr. Stassen wants to attach to American loans. We do not object to the suggested requirements that debtor nations agree not to discriminate against American trade and to give "unwavering support to the United Nations," though in regard to the second a difficult problem of impartial interpretation arises. But we part company very sharply with Mr. Stassen when he declares: "We should expect agreements that the governments with which we work will not move farther away from individual economic freedom and will not go down the sad trail of increasing nationalization or socialization or government ownership." In other words, we should insist on usurping the legislative powers of the British, French, and other parliaments. This is dollar dictatorship with a vengeance.

*

THE DOWAGERS OF THE AMERICAN Revolution resolved last week at their annual convention that Constitution Hall in Washington will continue to be open only to white artists and that the United Nations is all right so long as it keeps its place. "If the U. N. can succeed, that is fine," said Mrs. Brosseau, chairman of the Resolutions Committee, putting it right up to the U. N. "Meanwhile the D. A. R. certainly doesn't want to sell out to world government. We do not want the U. N. to absorb us and do away with our sovereignty." It is not exactly news that the D. A. R. is determined not to be seduced. Still we think Mrs. Brosseau's remarks should be preserved—preferably under glass, beneath one of those drawings by Helen Hokinson.

# *Planning or Starvation*

AT THE end of March, Congress renewed for a grudging three months the war-emergency legislation under which the government has been able to keep a check on the import and export of certain key commodities. Unless these powers are again extended before June 30, we are likely to have another demonstration of the folly of removing emergency controls before the emergency is past—this time on a world scale and with even grimmer consequences than marked the extinction of the OPA.

Without power on the part of government to direct the flow of commodities in short supply, it will be almost impossible to carry out a world program of relief and reconstruction on an effective and economical basis. As the retiring Under Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, pointed out in his speech of May 8, "It is wheat and coal and steel that are urgently required to stave off economic collapse, not just dollar credits . . . a continuation of export controls is required in order to direct exports where we want them to go and to cut down unnecessary and undesirable foreign buying in the domestic market."

But the need for controls goes beyond immediate aspects of reconstruction. More fundamental, from the standpoint of reviving a half-starved planet, is the necessity for promoting a healthy world trade, as free as mechanical arrangements can make it of the diverting effects of the almighty American dollar. This means a distribution of crucial commodities based on an over-all balance between the needs of individual countries and the total world supply. Normally, this balance might be achieved to a workable degree by the operation of the laws of supply and demand, but in the present state of world currencies those laws have little meaning. The commodities will go where the dollars are to be found, and the countries that need them most will be by-passed. There will be no inducement for Filipinos to send copra to France or for Chile to ship nitrates to the wretched farms of Greece when American soap manufacturers can buy all the copra that is available and American farmers can use all the nitrates—with payment in good American dollars. Sugar is an even more glaring case in point.

In the reverse direction, American grain, if uncontrolled, would find its way to countries with dollar credits. Removal of controls on food distribution in general would help some Latin American countries (Mexico, Venezuela, and Cuba), the Union of South Africa (amply supplied with gold), Switzerland, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, and, to some extent, China and India. But it would make for exceedingly rough going in France, Britain, the Netherlands, and Norway. Since these countries can tighten belts no further without dangerous malnutrition, their only recourse would be to use up more of their dwindling supply of dollars at the expense of other imports, such as machinery—a process that rules out reconstruction and can lead only to permanent dependence. As for the countries on relief—Greece, Poland, and the defeated powers—higher food prices, resulting from the abandonment of controls, would merely mean higher relief appropriations here at home.

The nerve center of world controls at present is the International Emergency Food Council. It is through this agency that representatives of thirty-two nations—unfortunately, the Soviet Union has refused to join—make known their needs and their total supplies of the world's crucial foods. After a process of intensive bargaining, cajoling, and mediation, periodic charts are worked out for each commodity, recommending the amount to be exported by each of the supplying nations to each of the purchasing nations. While the council's role is advisory, government acceptance has been forthcoming in a remarkably high percentage of cases, and the plan has been of inestimable help in heading off a disastrous maldistribution.

Should Congress allow the import and export controls to die, we would automatically forfeit our seat in the

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council, since the government would be without power to implement the recommendations of our representatives. This would be sad enough just as a setback in international sanity, but it can be disastrous in the light of the continued world emergency. In Britain it appears to be a matter of Parliamentary debate as to whether or not the country is "dying of starvation." A large part of France's winter wheat crop has been destroyed by one of the worst winters in Europe's history. The same tragic grain shortages afflict the Low Countries. Famine has raised its head in parts of Rumania, where drought destroyed the corn crop. Italians are a full thousand calories short of the minimum daily ration required for a full day's work, and Greeks, Bulgarians, and Yugoslavs are very little better off. If, in these circumstances, Congress denies the President's request for limited controls, it will shortly find out that the emergency it thought was past is just about to begin.

# *Dollars vs. Communism*

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

WITH the President's signature attached to the Greek-Turkish aid bill, the new American foreign policy is now legally in effect. Hundreds of millions have been appropriated to carry the gospel to the heathen, with billions to follow. What remains is to select the missionaries and their leaders, arm them with dollars for gifts and credits, with guns and food, and with the sacred American "know how" which, above all benefactions, is considered a sovereign defense against communism and other disorders of ailing systems.

There are those who say the policy will fail or justify itself according to the men our government selects to administer it, and certainly any creed takes on some of the character of its prophets. But it would be foolish to bank too much on this popular notion, for the reverse is even more generally the case. Men very soon take on the character of the creed they are hired to expound, be it free enterprise or communism or Catholicism or the preeminent superiority of the Fuller brush.

Some liberal supporters of Mr. Truman's doctrine argue that opposition to communism only incidentally involves support of reactionaries: that it need not do so. They believe quite sincerely that we can and should, and even perhaps will, convert the Greek government to the democratic precepts applied in some advanced parts of the United States; or otherwise that firm American intervention will force the regime to adopt a sober and moderate course. They cite as hopeful evidence the apparent willingness of the Maximos government to accept U. N. supervision of the carrying out of an amnesty. What such people ignore is the essential meaning of the Greek struggle; with all the talk about Russian penetration and border violations they forget that a revolution is going on in Greece. The issues may be confused, but they will not be solved even by an internationally supervised amnesty. The peasants and guerrilla fighters in the mountains are not going to come out, I imagine, or give up their arms, until they know that the men responsible for the acts of the Nazi-trained security police and the armed gangs and the military repressions have been ousted from power. Otherwise their lives would be safe only as long as the amnesty observers remained on the spot. And their cause would be lost.

An amnesty in Greece will mean something when it is proclaimed by a government that wants to cooperate with the people in the mountains. And such an amnesty will not need to be supervised by Danes and Hollanders.

In spite of the efforts of its apologists, the Truman Doctrine is not supported by faith or enthusiasm. Its authors are on the defensive; its supporters are luke-warm. Nobody except a few rabid right-wingers wants to give "aid" to the interests and parties our government will have to back in a political war against Russia. They accept the new policy as the only available alternative to the proclaimed threat of Communist domination of Europe. They hope that economic and military support of weak regimes may dissolve that threat without war. They hope the operation will simultaneously revive true democracy; but they have no very live belief that it will. And soon they will learn that it can only do so if the United States is prepared, not merely to repair physical damage and stiffen weak governments and sagging currencies, but to accept and even subsidize the revolutionary changes that are needed in the countries penetrated by communism.

Since it is difficult to imagine our present Administration and, still more, our present Congress financing revolution in even its mildest and most legal forms, the chance of reviving democracy through the Truman Doctrine seems remote. And so the best administrators will be driven to a futile course of poulticing deep infections. I do not envy the man Mr. Truman finally induces to head his Greek mission.

Opponents of the new doctrine frequently insist that it will drive disgusted and despairing democrats into communism. And so it will, no doubt. It will tend to polarize political sentiment and weaken the center. But it is risky to assume that this will mean victory for the extreme left. It may have exactly the opposite effect, as was the case after World War I.

The situation in Europe then mildly paralleled the situation today. The fresh revolutionary impulse of the Soviets was spreading through the dreary wasteland left by the war. The economic system was in general collapse;

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populations were starving; governments were almost helpless. The central desire of the great powers was to stem revolution and restore some sort of stability.

In 1918 and 1919 the countries of Eastern Europe were mostly run by Socialists. There was a Socialist government in Vienna, a left-liberal government in Budapest; Social Democrats were dominant in the new Czechoslovak state. In Germany the moderate Socialists in control of the new Republican regime were threatened with left-wing revolts all over the country; Bavaria was briefly ruled by a left-Socialist soviet. The workers in Italy were seizing the factories. Further east, the Balkans and Hungary and Rumania were in the throes of an agrarian revolution—the "green" rising. Observers said then, as they say today: the Continent is heading into socialism; the old order is finished.

It headed into fascism instead. The process of change was checked or deflected, partly by the suicidal fight among the parties of the left, partly by the rise of counter-revolutionary forces encouraged by the big powers and financed by big business, partly by American loans which helped to patch together the frail economy of Europe. Until, at the end of the turbulent decade, the great depression knocked out the underpinnings and the whole structure crumbled into fascism and war.

It could happen again, I suppose. Only this time the destruction of values is so much more thorough, the middle class so much weaker, the need of fundamental change so much more obvious, that even a temporary renaissance of the pre-war capitalist society is hard to imagine. Perhaps the Truman Doctrine can do it. But it will take more dollars and guns than last time, both because the job is bigger and because people are reluctant to start the old cycle over again. They've "had enough" —and more. They want a change. And they will not thank the government that spends billions to prevent it.

# *Letter from Bilbao*

[*What follows is taken from a private letter smuggled out of Spain and received on May 22 in New York. It was written by a Basque labor leader whose name must obviously be suppressed.*]

*Bilbao, May 12*

The strike is over and I want to tell you all that has happened in these past two weeks. The strike began on May 1. It was nearly total in the industrial region of Vizcaya and total in Eibar. It did not spread to San Sebastian and Pasajes as was believed the first morning. When on May 1 the workers failed to appear in the factories, the authorities were astounded. The governor immediately undertook the most drastic measures in order to smash the strike if possible the same day. Realizing that the strike was clearly a political one, he requested the owners of the factories to turn in a list of the workers, giving their full names.

In view of the measures taken by the governor, the U. G. T. (General Workers Union) and the C. N. T. (National Confederation of Workers) and the Solidaridad de Obreros Vascos met and issued a printed statement to the workers asking them not to go back to the plants until they had a guaranty that no reprisals would take place. The workers stayed out, and on the following day the strike spread to other factories. Besides, a good number of factory owners refused to deliver the lists of workers demanded by the governor.

The committee had made it clear in its first statement that the strike was not for any union or individual gains but had a definite political significance. It was a declaration on the part of the workers of their right to celebrate May 1 and an implicit condemnation of the regime. Enraged by this attitude, the governor requested the central government to send several military units from neighboring provinces. At the same time, armed Falangists began a hunt of workers through private houses and in the streets. There was a mass arrest of the most suspected elements. The prison was overcrowded, and 6,000 men were herded into the Plaza de Toros (the bull ring). You may imagine that it is not a very pleasant place to be held, with the memory of the terrible massacre in the Plaza de Toros of Badajoz [in 1936] still fresh in everyone's mind.

The strike lasted until May 12. On that day the various labor organizations ordered the men back to the factories. Although a policeman or Falangista watched the movements of practically every worker, the strike committee met regularly and was able to maintain contact with the strikers.

Now the reprisals have begun. The government is deporting the most suspected workers to other provinces of Spain as prisoners. Hundreds of others have gone to the mountains to join the resistance. Still others have succeeded in crossing the Pyrenees.

To show how jittery the authorities have become, let me name the outside contingents that were brought to Bilbao during the strike. These were the regiment of heavy artillery from Logroño, the Garellano regiment of infantry from Logroño, the Castilla regiment of infantry from Burgos, the Valencia regiment of infantry from Santander.

The spirit of the men was magnificent. The strike gave us an opportunity to take the pulse of the masses. The great majority didn't want to hear anything about the monarchy, a plebiscite, or any deal with the reaction. They want the republic only, and people who suggest compromise they call traitors.

I hope that the men who succeed in escaping will find in France the support they need. They are leaving here women and children whom we shall try to help. But we have not enough means to do so. For the moment, everything is quiet again—though not so quiet in the prisons where the Franco guards are beating the workers in the hope that they will denounce their leaders. They will have to kill all before they get a single name. It is possible that if the four hundred men still under arrest are not promptly released, a new strike of solidarity will break out. In that case, it may extend to the entire Basque country. Anyhow, people have learned to strike again; I do not say "learned to fight again" because they have never stopped fighting.

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# *Atomic Energy for the Millions*

BY LEONARD ENGEL

IT IS generally thought that the practical application of atomic energy is still ten or twenty years away, but if we want it, we can have atomic energy to use—millions of kilowatts of it—in two or three years. In ten years we can be on the way to an atomic standard of living—cities without smoke, super-convenient mechanized homes, and an inexhaustible abundance of goods without long or disagreeable labor. That we are not already on the road to the atomic age is due more to political than to scientific or technical circumstances.

At Hanford, Washington, three huge atomic piles have been in operation for nearly three years. Together they generate as much power as the Bonneville or Grand Coulee Dam. Of course, the power is not in usable form. In 1944, when the piles were built, power was not a critical need. It was time and materials that were short. So the piles were designed exclusively for the production of plutonium for bombs. Instead of being harnessed, the heat generated at Hanford is dissipated in the Columbia River by a mammoth cooling system which literally carries the river through the piles. Construction of the cooling system was a tremendous job. In fact, it would not have been much more difficult to dispose of the heat by raising steam for turbo-generators. The Hanford piles would then have produced power as well as plutonium, and half a million kilowatts—enough to meet the basic needs of a city the size of Seattle—would have been added to the nation's power resources.

Other large atomic-power plants could be built to spark the needed expansion of our economy. Yet only a small experimental unit at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, is under construction. When it is finished sometime next year, it will generate a few tens of thousands of kilowatts. No plans have been made for larger units.

The Atomic Energy Commission and top government and industry policy-makers have ostensibly been waiting on completion of the Oak Ridge plant before proceeding. But this is not the heart of the matter. It is an open secret among scientists that atomic-energy research has been at a virtual halt since V-J Day. Little work of importance has been done except possibly in the development of bigger and better bombs. Most of the great research projects that were blueprinted in the first flush of enthusiasm remain on paper. This state of affairs was exposed when the army, in response to determined scientific prodding, agreed a year ago to sell radioactive tracers—a vital tool of scientific research—produced in one of the Oak Ridge piles. A rush of orders from laboratories all over the country was anticipated. Actually, only a few hundred sales have been made.

The slowdown in atomic research was at first, no doubt, a reflection of the post-war letdown. However, when the men of science were ready for work again after their brief "holiday," they encountered a succession of formidable obstacles. The first was the Manhattan District's restrictive policies with regard to publication of war-time research. Months went by before any papers at all were released, and the final declassification of papers was so clumsily handled that the exchange of basic scientific information was delayed for many months more. Then the development of atomic energy was stalled by the long wrangle over the atomic-energy bill and the army's fight for a military veto over research. Later, the shameful campaign against Lilienthal was the road block. Finally, there has been the fact that industry is uninterested in, not to say hostile to, atomic-energy development. The thought of government-owned atomic-power plants gives industrial executives the heebies-jeebies. They show their displeasure by keeping their scientists and technicians busy in other fields; only a few of the hundreds of firms that took part in the atom-bomb project are now active in atomic research.

According to every one of the scientists associated with the development of the bomb, we already possess all the basic knowledge necessary for harnessing nuclear energy. No fundamental problem remains to be solved, declares Dr. Enrico Fermi, the man who built the first chain-reacting pile: "atomic power is solely a question of eventual technical development." This means that no necessity exists for waiting. Technical development, solution of the problems connected with the actual erection of plants, is a commodity that can be bought for delivery by a specified date. Industry buys technical development every day. If a quarter of the scientists and engineers who collaborated on the bomb were put to work on nuclear power plants, we could have half a dozen 500,000-kilowatt units in operation by 1950.

As a result of the lack of progress on the atomic front a great many serious misconceptions about atomic energy have gained wide currency. Perhaps they are a rationalization of our failure to push ahead. At any rate, they tend to suggest the remoteness and limited usefulness of atomic energy—except for military purposes.

There is, for example, a widespread notion that atomic-

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power plants will be dangerous and difficult to manage. We must have a whole new race of scientists and specialists, it is said, to assure their safety. Admittedly the erection and maintenance of atomic piles demand great skill. Without it serious accidents could happen. But the safety record of the war-time bomb project shows that we have the skill needed. Moreover, the *operation* of piles is another matter entirely. A pile is as easy to tend as an automatic coal furnace. Anyone of normal intelligence, says Fermi, can learn how in a few hours.

The atomic pile consists of lumps of uranium spaced within a graphite or heavy-water "moderator." A power pile differs from an ordinary pile mainly in being run at a higher temperature and in having some means of transferring heat to a boiler or an engine. The reaction which generates heat is the fission of atoms of Uranium 235 in the lumps of uranium. Fission occurs when neutrons collide with other U-235 atoms; this releases more neutrons, and so on in a swift chain reaction.

To regulate the flow of heat and power from the pile, one has only to control the stream of neutrons. This is easily done by inserting rods of a neutron-absorbing material like the metal cadmium into the pile. When the rods are pushed all the way in, the flow of neutrons is broken and fission stops; as the rods are withdrawn, the fission process resumes. The control mechanism is really so simple that it will in time be completely automatic.

It is also said that atomic-power plants will be prohibitively expensive (didn't the Manhattan District development cost two billion dollars?), that atomic energy will not greatly reduce the cost of power as delivered to the factory or home, and that the raw materials for its production are so scarce as to limit its usefulness. Not one of these statements is correct. For once, the truth lies with the "fantastic" stories of a new scientific discovery. The atom will quickly prove itself a limitless source of incredibly cheap power.

Three studies of the cost of atomic power have appeared in the past two years. The latest, prepared by the Northern California Association of Scientists for the Carnegie International Peace Endowment, declares that the atom is already competitive with coal at a delivered price of $6 a ton—a price for coal most of the world will never see again. And atomic engineering is in its infancy. As scientists and engineers gain experience, costs will drop. The Carnegie report, moreover, assumes a power plant that is unconventional only in having an atomic heating unit instead of a coal furnace. But the future will bring completely new methods of power generation and transmission. "Direct generation" of electricity, an old scientific dream that is now realizable, will eliminate turbines and dynamos. "Wireless transmission" will do away with expensive distribution systems. As a result, we can look forward to a reduction of power costs by a factor of ten in a generation.

When the atom flashed into the world's consciousness in August, 1945, uranium mining was under way in only four places—at Great Bear Lake in northern Canada, in Colorado, at Joachimstal in Czechoslovakia, and in the Haut Katanga district of the Belgian Congo. It has therefore been assumed that the raw materials of atomic energy are scarce. In fact, the prediction has been made that if we changed over from coal and oil to the atom, supplies would be exhausted in a few decades.

Of that there is no danger whatever. To begin with, a little fissionable material goes an astonishingly long way. Two or three pounds a day will meet the present electricity needs of power-hungry Pittsburgh. Three hundred tons a year will match the current American output of energy from coal, oil, gasoline, natural gas, and waterpower. In any case, uranium is not rare. It is more abundant than antimony, mercury, and silver together. Much of it, to be sure, is widely dispersed instead of being concentrated in easily worked ore bodies. But the discovery of new deposits can be expected—after all, the search for uranium has scarcely begun. And uranium is not the only source of atomic energy. Another is thorium, which is three times as abundant as uranium. Thorium itself is not fissionable, but it can be converted into fissionable Uranium 233 by a process similar to that employed at Hanford for transforming non-fissionable Uranium 238 into fissionable plutonium.

The one really scarce raw material is Uranium 235, the only natural fissionable element. U-235 is found in conjunction with U-238. At present U-235 is essential both in power generation and in the manufacture of plutonium and U-233. For every pound of plutonium made, somewhat more than a pound of U-235 is consumed. Thus a shortage of U-235 *could* delay the coming of the atomic age. Piles can be designed, however, to generate plutonium, or U-233, faster than U-235 is used —to produce, in other words, an ever-growing surplus of fissionable material. Nuclear physicists are confident that such piles will be built and that they will reduce requirements of U-235 to zero long before the world's reserves of it are gone. Incidentally, the elimination of U-235 will be a major factor in reducing costs, for the processing of U-235 is one of the most expensive operations.

Clearly, then, atomic energy is entirely and immediately practicable. Now that Lilienthal has finally been confirmed, perhaps we shall move a little faster toward its development. We need it sorely. In the United States we are sliding into a new depression; in other countries hundreds of millions of people are suffering desperate hunger and poverty. The atom can change all this overnight; it can open up new agricultural and industrial frontiers in every state of the Union and every corner of the world. Those who disregard these possibilities, those who would leave the atom in military hands, are either fools or knaves.

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# *One Country: Equal Rights*

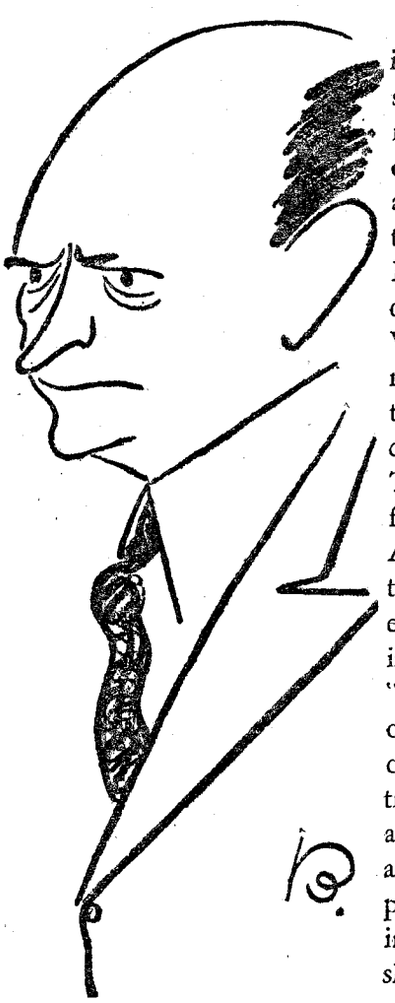
BY ELLIS ARNALL

THE Supreme Court of the United States has sustained the Interstate Commerce Commission's order in the "class-rate" case in such sweeping language as to justify a belief that the United States, after all these years, will again become one nation. It means that the South is well on its way to readmission to the Union!

The mandate of the ICC, now upheld by the Supreme Court, directs the ultimate equalization of transportation charges upon such manufactured products as move under "class rates" within the various sections of the United States. These class rates are basic measuring rates by which other rates are established. Until complete equalization is achieved, the order of the ICC puts into effect new tariffs by decreasing certain Southern and Western class rates 10 per cent and increasing corresponding Northern and Eastern rates 10 per cent.

The economic consequences of the decision are much less important than the political consequences. Of course, if the Interstate Commerce Commission proceeds to apply the same remedies to the inequities in other rates, an immediate impetus will be given to the industrialization of the South and the West. That, however, is too much to hope for. The ICC moves with a slowness that is without equal among regulatory bodies in this country.

After much prodding by the Southern Governors' Conference the ICC some years ago instituted a cost investigation and study of class rates from which stems the order so recently upheld by the United States Supreme Court. When in May, 1944, Georgia, as a sovereign state, applied to the Supreme Court of the United States for equitable relief under the Sherman and Clayton acts, the ICC took a renewed interest in its dockets and studies. It then quickly issued the order in favor of the Southern and Western states.



*Ellis Arnall*
As seen by Oscar Berger

While the order is limited in scope, it is enormously significant because it shows that the Interstate Commerce Commission and the Supreme Court have recognized the existence of discriminations against the inhabitants of three-fourths of the area of the continental United States. More important than the opportunity offered a limited number of Southern and Western industrialists to compete on the national market is the establishment of the principle that the United States is one country without internal trade barriers. This is certain to evoke angry protests from the groups which are convinced that America can exist one-fourth empire and three-fourths colonial area for ruthless exploitation and spoliation. The banking interests that control the railroads of "Official Territory," sometimes through ownership of less than 5 per cent of the outstanding stock of the lines, the industrialists who have benefited by freight and wage differentials and by Western and Southern colonialism, the political puppets who work energetically for these interests—all these will be angry and shocked at the straightforward language of Justice William O. Douglas.

And a few Southerners also will agree with them. You can list such Southerners: the scalawag spokesmen for absentee or carpetbagger enterprises, the political quacks whose professional Southernism is the most lamentable misfortune to stem from Appomattox Courthouse, the men interested in retarding industry in the South so that its labor supply may be used to produce raw materials cheaply. Their screams will match those of the Eastern monopolists.

In political terms the Supreme Court's decision means that the United States is committed to at least one New Deal concept—that this is one country and that all Americans have equal rights.

The next test will come when Georgia's case reaches the nine justices. Special Master Lloyd Garrison has at his disposal an enormous mass of evidence through which Georgia seeks to prove that a conspiracy violative of the Sherman and Clayton acts exists in railroad circles. Georgia is asking that competitive free enterprise be restored in this most important field of business.

*ELLIS ARNALL, former governor of Georgia, has taken active leadership in the fight against discriminatory freight rates.*

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The domination of almost all the major railroads by a limited number of banking houses, the establishment of a vast hierarchy of associations, conferences, bureaus, boards, committees, agencies, and commissions for rate-making, and the use of this machinery to throttle competitive industry outside "Official Territory" constitute a challenge to the entire history of free enterprise. Obviously, whoever controls the railroads controls the economy of America. Two-thirds of the freight traffic of the nation is handled by the rail lines, compared with less than one-sixth by inland waterways and less than 6 per cent by truck. Not only individual business enterprises, not only communities, not only states, but whole sections of our country find their economic security dependent upon the freight rates they must pay to ship their goods to distant markets or to obtain their supplies. Thus the economic future of every part of the country, and of every individual, rests ultimately with the Board of Directors of the Association of American Railroads, which is dominated by representatives of Eastern lines controlled by certain banking interests.

Private government is fascism. Public ownership and operation of enterprise imply some degree of socialization, heretofore acceptable only in the case of highways, the postal service, and a limited number of local utilities, except in emergencies such as created the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Georgia proposes that competition-plus-regulation be given a fair trial before the railroads force the nation into a dangerous political and social experiment that violates our customs and our way of thought.

It is significant that transportation should provide the battleground for these two major issues: the unification of our divided country, and the reversal of the trend to private government. The Supreme Court has at last answered the question whether the United States is to be a political as well as a geographic entity. The results of that decision will be jeopardized unless the court holds that private government is forbidden under our laws. But if we win the victory on both fronts, we shall be able to establish a decentralized national economy, with a better distribution of population and a more equitable distribution of wealth.

Justice Douglas's opinion holds much promise for the future. At the very least it affirms that the United States is the common country of all its citizens.

# *Ernest Bevin's Great Light*

BY AYLMER VALLANCE

*London, May 17*

WHEN Paul of Tarsus saw a great light on the road to Damascus, his friends can hardly have been more astonished by the change in him than was the British Foreign Office by the sudden conversion which Mr. Bevin appears to have experienced during his brief stay in Warsaw on the way home from the Moscow conference. His talk with Premier Cyrynkiewicz seems to have brought him abruptly round to the view that, after all, the new government of Poland is reasonably "democratic," that there must be no more sentimental British support for Mr. Mikolajczyk's right-wing Peasant Party, and that, in any event, Polish dairy produce is worth more than ideological prejudices. Back in England the Foreign Secretary lost no time in telling the Anders Poles here that it was their patriotic duty to return to their country and work for its reconstruction, and he has let his lieutenants in the Foreign Office know that the new Anglo-Polish trade pact has his unqualified blessing. Signs of a new orientation of British foreign policy are also to be seen in this week's announcement that a great expansion in British trade with the U. S. S. R. is hoped for: steel rails, machinery, and scientific instruments are to be exchanged for shipments of timber—badly needed here for the wood-starved and delayed housing program—and an allocation to Britain of a good share of the three million tons of wheat which the Soviet Union hopes to be able to export in the coming year.

How interpret this sudden change of front, coming so swiftly after Mr. Bevin's adoption at Moscow of an attitude toward the U. S. S. R. at least as "tough" as that of Mr. Marshall? One explanation suggested is that the Foreign Secretary recognized one fine morning that the Truman Doctrine would give Britain a chance to do a useful bit of export-trade promotion. Just as England's weakness was Ireland's chance, so America's unpopularity among the non-Trumanized might give its junior partner a golden opportunity. If the U. S. S. R. and the Central and Southeastern European countries within the Soviet sphere of influence were to be denied any share in the "discriminating" outward flow of loaned dollars, they would be unable to satisfy their needs by importing goods from the United States. Why not, then, encourage them to have recourse to the British market? And if supplies of Russian timber and wheat enabled Britain to

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*Ernest Bevin*

draw more slowly on the dwindling dollar loan and to be a bit more "choosy" about two-dollar wheat in Chicago, so much the better!

An alternative explanation is that Mr. Bevin has been thinking primarily not of a mere stroke of good business for Britain but in terms rather of the current trend of political opinion in both the Labor movement and the electorate as a whole. The situation is complex; in weighing it up one has to take account of personal tensions and ambitions within the Cabinet and also of the growing realization within the Labor Party that though the issues have not yet come fully to the surface, it is the consequences of foreign policy that will ultimately determine the voting in the general election of 1950.

The easy success of the Labor candidate in the recent by-election at Jarrow, a Tyneside town left bankrupt by capitalist rationalization of shipbuilding in the inter-war period, showed clearly that in industrial centers, where the memories of unemployment and the means test are still vivid, there is undiminished loyalty to the government which came to power in 1945. A visit by this correspondent to the constituency during the campaign convinced him that the electors of Jarrow were unreservedly satisfied with the government's record. Any dissatisfaction is in the constituencies of Greater London and the Midlands, which did not experience the North's desperate unemployment in the thirties, and whose voters —particularly the women—are chiefly conscious now that war-boom earnings are falling, that prices are rising, and that shortages in the shops continue.

These disgruntled electors, many of whom voted Labor for the first time two years ago, have not yet got round to formulating in their minds any very intelligent criticism of governmental planning on the home front. Grounds for such criticism do, indeed, exist: though coal output under the newly inaugurated five-day week in the mines has not shown the drop which was feared, fuel supplies—allocated without real distinction between essential and unessential units of factory production—will keep the whole British manufacturing industry working during the summer months at only 80 per cent of capacity, and for even this the risk must be taken of starting next winter with barely adequate stocks and banking on kindlier weather next February. But if by 1950 the government has been able to "get by" without cuts in rations or serious unemployment caused by shortage of raw materials, and to fill the shops a little, then London and the Midlands will as likely as not vote Labor into power again.

Indeed, so far as domestic policy is concerned, the Labor Party has even less cause for anxiety in that the long-awaited Tory program, published this week under the title of "Industrial Charter," makes singularly little appeal to the great mass of the electors. Admitting that a Tory government could not in practice do away with rationing and controls until scarcity had been replaced by abundance, the program also concedes that there could be no wholesale denationalization of industries taken over or about to be taken over by the state, and that, in fact, laissez faire is dead. What the Tories advocate instead is a sort of concordat between big business and the state which bears a suspicious resemblance to the corporative *étatisme* of Hitler and Mussolini. Trade associations—in plain words, monopolistic associations dominated by the big concerns—are to be responsible within each industry for allocating the use of resources distributed by the state to each sector of the nation's economy. This is not an appetizing dish to set before a country which learned a good deal of the results of monopolies, price rings, and restrictive policies during the recurrent crises and unemployment of the period between the two world wars.

The government, in short, has little to fear from a politically bankrupt opposition. If it fails to get a renewal of its mandate three years hence, the reason will be that it has dug its own grave. It need not do so, but there is a danger that the whole of Britain's experiment in gradualist socialism may be wrecked by a grandiose foreign policy and the attempt to carry excessive commitments abroad—as has been emphasized cogently by "Keep Left," a pamphlet recently published over the names of Richard Crossman, Michael Foot, and a dozen other members of the left-center group of Labor Party "rebels." "Keep Left" shows convincingly that the only sort of planning which can extricate Britain from its economic difficulties requires a big shift of man-power from

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the armed forces to productive industry. Already the authors of this pamphlet have scored one major success: they persuaded the government hastily to amend the conscription bill and to reduce the period of compulsory service from eighteen to twelve months. This means that even if an optimistic view be taken of the results of voluntary enlistment for the regular army, the ceiling for Britain's armed forces after 1949 will be 600,000 men. The army will have a strength not exceeding 300,000 men, of whom about half will be partially trained recruits not available for garrison duty outside Europe. The bearing of these figures on Britain's ability to play the part of a great power will doubtless be emphasized by the "rebels" at the Margate conference of the Labor Party on May 27. They will urge that we should lose no time in recutting our foreign-policy coat to conform to this prospective 50 per cent reduction in our cloth.

According to most British newspapers, Mr. Bevin was furiously angry that his Cabinet colleagues should have agreed during his absence in Moscow to a reduction in the strength of the services which is bound radically to modify British foreign policy. It is possible, however, that this interpretation of his reaction was Tory wish-fulfilment. He may have begun to be impressed by the insistence of the "rebels" that shortage of man-power is Britain's Achilles heel. He is unlikely to ignore the fact that the "bread-and-butter" Ministers in the Cabinet—Bevan, Strachey, Cripps, and Shinwell—share the point of view of the "rebels" that Labor will go down to defeat in 1950 if, like the French government in the twenties, it pursues *la gloire* at the expense of building up solid prosperity at home. Moreover, the Foreign Secretary can hardly overlook the return to the arena, after his illness, of Herbert Morrison, that astute supporter of the winning side.

Is it, then, to be supposed that Mr. Bevin is "bending"? Certainly in his lengthy speech to Parliament on foreign affairs he seemed to be cautiously veering away from the idea of an Anglo-American bloc against communism. While adhering to the view that money should not be poured into Germany from the west in order that reparations from current production might flow out to the east, he was at pains to speak of Russian—and Polish—claims in sympathetic terms, to refer to "friendlier feelings" in the relations between Britain and the Balkan countries, and to express confidence that when the Foreign Ministers next met, an acceptable compromise on all the issues which had defied agreement at Moscow could be worked out.

Too much perhaps should not be read into these signs of conversion: Mr. Bevin's new-found appreciation of the virtues of trade with Eastern Europe might not survive another wrestling match with Mr. Molotov in November. But at least the impression here is general that he is now sincerely opposed to a "two-world" peace which would partition Europe and leave Britain with no alternative but increasing dependence on the financial generosity of the American Congress.

# *India Drifts Toward Civil War*

BY SHIVA RAO

*Simla, May 19*

MOUNTBATTEN'S dramatic dash to London yesterday for direct consultations with the British Cabinet emphasizes the urgency of a generally acceptable solution of the Indian problem. It is less than two months since he succeeded Lord Wavell as Viceroy. On the eve of this change, on February 20, Attlee announced that Britain would withdraw from India by June of next year.

It was generally understood that Mountbatten would be given a free hand to make appropriate variations in British policy so long as its broad features stood unaltered: namely, continuation of the work of the Constituent Assembly, the orderly transfer of power until the final phase of British withdrawal, and encouragement of unity in India. During these seven weeks of his viceroyalty Mountbatten has impressed everyone with his whole-hearted acceptance of the Labor government's India policy, though many officials occupying high places have been not only critics but almost saboteurs.

Analyzing the Indian situation last month, I told *Nation* readers that Mountbatten, having heard all sides, must begin to frame decisions of his own. That this phase had been reached was indicated early in May by the dispatch of Lord Ismay, his chief adviser, to London with proposals which would demonstrate beyond doubt the genuineness of British intentions. One point Mountbatten is generally believed to have underlined is that the situation was rapidly deteriorating and Britain could not hope to control it much longer.

Lord Ismay's discussions with Attlee and other Labor Ministers led to the announcement that the Viceroy would unfold British plans on May 17, after the first preliminary conference of the five top-ranking Indian

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leaders—Nehru and Patel of the Congress Party, Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan representing the Moslem League, and Sardar Baldev Singh as the Sikh spokesman. Within twenty-four hours came a laconic statement that the conference had been postponed until early in June. Then came the third startling report that the Viceroy would fly to London for direct consultations with the Cabinet and return to New Delhi for a conference with Indian leaders, now scheduled for June 2. The report delicately referred to the Cabinet's "general agreement" on the Viceroy's proposals. It is widely held that his visit will enable such differences as do exist to be smoothed out.

Until almost the moment of his departure from New Delhi yesterday Mountbatten busied himself with ascertaining the views of different party leaders on the latest proposals. His personal reputation is high among most classes of people. His lack of conventional rigidity has pleased the common man. He persuaded Gandhi and Jinnah to issue a joint appeal for peace, having brought the two leaders together for a talk. Gandhi has frequently spoken of the Viceroy as an honest statesman pledged to carry out the British promise. He believes, however, that withdrawal should not be delayed until June of next year but effected immediately.

What are the Viceroy's proposals which have necessitated his visit to London? No one can say authoritatively. The feature of the situation that chiefly demands a new approach is the widespread conviction among non-Moslems of the two key provinces, Bengal and Punjab, that partition of some sort is not only inevitable but eminently desirable. Last year, when three Cabinet Ministers spent several months in New Delhi, the demand for the division of India came from the Moslem League alone, all other parties opposing it. The plan which they left behind visualized a single central administration—with its jurisdiction limited, however, to three or four departments—and condemned the division of the country as dangerous to defense.

The massacres which have disgraced India since August have brought about strange political shifts. The Moslem League, while continuing to preach a divided India, demands undivided provinces so that Pakistan may include all Punjab and Bengal as well as Assam and Sind. The Hindus and Sikhs retort with a suggestion for dividing Punjab and Bengal if India as a whole must be divided. Jinnah detests the idea of divided provinces but cannot deny to non-Moslem majorities in East Punjab and West Bengal the same right to secede which he claims for Moslems throughout India. The Pathans in the northwest, in the region adjoining Afghanistan, have started a line of their own. What have they, their leaders ask, in common with the Hindus or the Moslems of India? Racially, linguistically, culturally, their affinities are with the Afghans.

It is clear that once the process of redrawing the map of India starts, alterations will not be so simple or so few as Jinnah now imagines. The princes, too, have long memories. The Nizam of Hyderabad wants to get back the rich area of Berar which he somewhat absentmindedly gave to the British a half-century ago. He wants access to the sea. When India becomes independent he will probably proclaim Hyderabad's independence. The Sikh princes, finding their territories on the boundary line which will divide the Punjab, have shown a remarkable tendency to acquire implements of war. The Sikhs have suffered terribly in the devastating riots in West Punjab, and tens of thousands of refugees have poured into the territories of the princes for relief and protection. Barely a century ago the Sikhs were the masters of Punjab and even beyond. The Rajputana princes have been holding secret conferences at which, according to reports, they are forging defensive alliances.

Thus the imminence of British withdrawal is stirring memories and ambitions of all sorts among many kinds of people. Gandhi may wander around India preaching the cult of non-violence, the unity of India, and the gospel of forgiveness—verily a modern Buddha—but how many, though they may admire or even worship him, practice his teachings? It is no secret that private armies are being formed. Crude bombs, hand grenades, flame-throwers, and rifles, not to mention knives and swords, are coming into common use when riots break out. More than a million men have been demobilized since the end of the war. They enlisted not because they were moved by principle but because they were attracted by the pay, the better food, and the clothing they received in the army. Now unemployed, they desperately seek a comparable standard of living.

These post-war problems are sufficiently formidable to tax the energies and resources of any administration. They have been almost neglected because of the preoccupation of India's leaders with independence. British officials say that they are going and these problems are not their concern any more. A number of Indian officials have been affected by Hindu-Moslem differences. The administration no longer claims their undivided loyalty.

Mountbatten has seen the danger that India will drift toward civil war unless something big and striking is done immediately, though even that may prove too late. Wavell, whom Churchill chose for India's Viceroy when Linlithgow was too tired to continue, was a soldier, not a statesman, and proved a failure. One thing that might yet spare India the horrors of civil war would be the immediate declaration of full dominion status, coupled with the determination to stamp out all incitement to violence, whoever preached it. If Mountbatten returns to New Delhi with full authority to put such a program into effect, India may still ride out the storm. But a storm there is bound to be, and the utmost skill and vision will be needed to avert disaster.

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# Dixie in Black and White

BY A. G. MEZERIK

## V. Big Push Against the Valley

*Knoxville, Tennessee*

THE South is in many ways the social laboratory of America. A constant search goes on here for ways of improving relations with minority groups, extending political democracy, and bringing the fruits of industrialization within reach of the people of the region.

This last effort is perhaps the most spectacular and encouraging. And almost none of its inspiration can be traced to communism: the South knows little about communism as a theory and has too few resident Communists to be affected by their words or actions. This is important to remember in Knoxville, headquarters of the TVA; and it is doubly important just now when the TVA is being assailed as never before by the private-power interests and their political henchmen. While the real purpose of the TVA's enemies—to regain control of the power business—has not changed, new slogans have been coined to take advantage of the present drive against world communism and its corollary, public ownership in this country. The reactions of the people in the Tennessee Valley to these slogans are singularly illuminating. Is the TVA employee resentful or fearful because his boss is the government? Is the employee of the Alabama Power Company, which serves adjacent areas, glad that the company for which he works is privately owned? It turns out that neither is concerned about this aspect of his work. Both think well of their employers; both discuss their jobs in terms of hours, wages, and security. When they compare the two utilities they speak of the conditions of work, or the opportunities for advancement, or the pension system. "Regimentation," "collectivism," "capitalism"—these ideas do not creep into their talk.

The consumers of power, the people who use it in their homes or factories or on their farms, are just as little concerned with the bogy of communism. They are interested in the cost of power, and they favor the TVA because it sells power more cheaply than private companies. In the hills that march up almost to the borders of the city of Chattanooga, mountaineers have lived for generations, remote and isolated in their unpainted cabins. Now the city of Chattanooga is bringing TVA power to these people. And though the Tennessee mountaineers have long been celebrated in song and story as fanatical individualists, not one has refused the chance to get light or heat because it is supplied by a publicly owned generating plant. Nor have any of the other three and a quarter million people in the seven states of the Valley refused for that reason. Even the gigantic monopolies, by using so much of TVA's power, testify to the irrelevancy of arguing about the sin or virtue of public ownership.

### PRIVATE INDUSTRY DEPENDS ON PUBLIC POWER

Du Pont, Alcoa, Monsanto, and Eastman are organizations which Representative Rankin himself could hardly accuse of collectivist leanings; yet they are among the ten great corporations which, with the United States installation at Oak Ridge, use 48 per cent of all the power developed by the TVA. America's great monopolies have built huge plants in the Valley because TVA power is cheap and abundant. The presidents of these companies, however, damn public ownership every time they speak at their 1947 versions of Liberty League dinners. Recently Gwilym A. Price, president of Westinghouse, one of the world's greatest producers of equipment for utility companies, went all out against collectivism. He was afraid people might fall for it in the belief that government ownership would lower prices. A survey made by the "Psychological Corporation," he said, had discovered that almost one-third of the people of the United States believed government ownership might bring lower prices. "This means," he added, "that one-third of our population has swallowed the Communist Party line and doesn't know it." Perhaps they have, but have du Pont, Union Carbon and Carbide, and Alcoa also fallen for it? They seem to be convinced that the government sells its product more cheaply than do private plants or they would not have located in the Valley. The private-utility bloc must think the same thing or they would not be trying to get Congress to make them the sole recipients and sales agents of all government-owned power.

Their actions of course have nothing to do with communism. They do, however, raise another kind of doubt. The TVA was developed with public money, yours, mine, and that of 135,000,000 other taxpayers. Monopolies use almost 48 per cent of TVA's electric power in their industrial operations; an additional 20 per cent is surplus and exported to the power lines of privately owned utility companies. On every cent's worth of that 68 per cent of TVA's power output these huge companies, in and outside the Valley, are getting a subsidy from the rest of us, for our taxes made possible the savings in power costs which they now enjoy. The success of private enterprise may be more dependent on public ownership than anyone has guessed—an idea not likely to attract the study or the sympathy of the N. A. M.

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Public subsidy works queer changes. In neighboring North Carolina a textile bourbon who has opposed not only the TVA at every stage, from planning through completion, but also the REA (Rural Electrification Administration) and everything connected with either has had a conversion. When I talked to him the other day, he described with great enthusiasm a new electrically powered knitting-machine designed for home use on farms. (The textile industry would like to revive the old work-at-home contracting business, which might develop into a strike-breaking and union-busting device, especially if the farmer's wife could be listed as a textile employee with a vote in National Labor Board elections.) I asked my bourbon acquaintance whether he had changed his mind and come to the conclusion that public power was really a fine thing. The answer was pithy: "It doesn't make any difference what I think about it; TVA is here to stay, and the textile industry is going to get what benefits it can from it."

The left hand of industry—it must be the left—takes the subsidy of cheap power rates and tries to find new ways to increase its share of that subsidy. But evidently the left hand says nothing at all to the right hand, which is busy trying to cripple the source of the subsidy.

### ONSLAUGHT OF THE UTILITIES

Under the protecting wing of a sympathetic Congress, David Lilienthal, in a demonstration of brilliant leadership as head of the TVA, managed until 1946 to fend off the private utilities' opposition. Now he has moved into the atomic field, and they have renewed their offensive with redoubled energy. They have launched their onslaught from many directions. One Congressional committee disapproved the appointment of Gordon Clapp as the new chairman of TVA at the same time that another was listening to the widely publicized outburst against Lilienthal. Both of these sallies failed, but in the attack the private-ownership interests revealed their long-range aims. They seek to take advantage of the Congressional mood of reaction to recapture the TVA and other public-power projects. That done, they plan to gain control of all but the military aspects of atomic energy. The stakes in both undertakings are gigantic.

Rates may be lowered to consumers, crops may be vastly improved as a result of TVA teaching and TVA phosphates, the whole region's standard of living may rise—from 1933 to 1939 it rose more than 70 per cent—but none of this counts with the utility companies. They want to control the sources of power, and now they see their big chance. They have been preparing for some years. More than a hundred big private electric-power companies have banded together as an association, the top executive of which has just registered with Congress as a lobbyist. His salary, he has disclosed, is $650,000 a year, which make him the highest paid lobbyist in Washington. In addition to this direct pressure on Congress the association employs high-powered publicists to sell the people on the incomparable virtues of private ownership. The approach is national, using pages in color in *Life* and other slick magazines and network radio time, locally sponsored of course. Local propaganda is not neglected by a long way. In every town and hamlet where private utilities have influence the private-power boys arrange speakers for luncheon meetings, buy local advertising, and spread the word against communism in general and the TVA in particular. Their henchmen operate in the legislatures of any state where public power is for sale or its development contemplated. In the far Northwest the private-power interests fight Bonneville with the same venom they show against TVA. They fight it even while they admit, as they did recently in the state of Washington, that only the national government can or will make the necessary investment to provide the additional power now so badly needed.

### CONGRESS ON THE RAMPAGE

In Congress the House has voted for the virtual elimination of public power in the West by denying any funds at all for its future development. Senator Thomas of Oklahoma has another proposal for killing public power. His bill seems to exempt TVA's existing operations but undermines TVA's base. The Senator from Oklahoma would also take from the Department of the Interior its real power of decision over the Bonneville and Central Valley projects and place the final authority over rates and the sale of power in the hands of the Federal Power Commission. Municipalities and other agencies which now distribute electricity would lose their present preferred status, and private utilities would get first crack at the purchase of public power wholesale. This would not only end the career of public-power districts and cooperatives with one blow but wipe out yardstick rates—a consummation devoutly to be desired by the private utilities. Finally, Senator Thomas's formula adds the last straw which will break the back of every public-power project. After the Federal Power Commission gets control it will be required to include the cost of the dam in its basis for public-power rates, even though the main purpose of the dam is flood control or irrigation; as a further guaranty of high rates the Thomas bill bars the building of any dam for the specific purpose of generating power. This will effectively kill off the possibility of any differential between the rates of public and private power.

Certain private utilities would like to raise their rates now, but they think it would be politically dangerous to try it. If they did, municipalities would redouble their efforts to take over the systems and operate them under public ownership. The power boys reason that the way to stop that trend is to force existing public-power proj-

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ects to sell all their power to private utilities, which will charge the consumer all the traffic will bear.

At least six bills have been introduced in Congress to check the expansion of public ownership. Some slash directly at the TVA. Action already approved on the floor of the House deprives the Department of the Interior of funds for Western irrigation and flood control as well as for public power. In order to make absolutely certain that public utilities are not even planned for, the House has eliminated funds for geologic and engineering surveys. No one in the Valley is in sympathy with this legislative rampage except such notorious pork-barrel politicians and spoilsmen as Senators McKellar and Stewart of Tennessee, who represent Crump, the czar of Memphis, not the people of the Valley.

No farmer, worker, or business man wants to see these legislative hatchet men succeed. They know that the TVA is very much more than a generator of electric energy. It is a deep waterway 650 miles long for carrying all sorts of goods, unimpeded by rapids or shallows or the snags of discriminatory freight rates. It is a chain of beautiful lakes where millions of persons can go fishing and boating. It is freedom from the fear of floods, for the Tennessee now is a completely "engineered" river, controlled as a unit, with every mile safeguarded. The TVA is industry, new industry—Valley-trained men and women work in factories which range in size from a two-man shop to the largest aluminum rolling mill in the world. Many small home-owned plants have come into being with the help of the TVA.

For the Valley people the TVA means more than a livelihood; it means almost a way of life. In former years the region was infested with malaria; in 1946, 9,300 examinations revealed only twenty-eight positive cases. Farm living has become a new experience. Electricity eases the burdens of overworked women and helps the farmers with their heavy chores. The radio brings entertainment—music and news of the world.

### FERTILIZER PROGRAM ENDANGERED

When Secretary of Agriculture Anderson said recently that the United States would become a second-class nation if it did not reclaim its exhausted and eroded farm lands, he was, perhaps unintentionally, pointing up the value of what TVA has already done for farmers in checking erosion, enriching the soil, creating new pastures and forests. The improvement wrought by the TVA depends fundamentally on its fertilizer program, and this is now in jeopardy. The private-utility interests have combined with the fertilizer interests to kill it. Though the country, and the whole famine-stricken world, is terribly short of fertilizer, that does not matter if TVA plans interfere with the operation of monopoly. The National Fertilizer Association has been part of a cartel for years and has paid three fines, one of $260,000, for monopolistic practices restricting the use of fertilizers.

Were the TVA out of the fertilizer business, this monopoly would have things all its own way. The result would be particularly serious in the matter of quality, for the phosphates produced by TVA have about three times the plant-food value of commercial fertilizers, and experiments have prepared the way for stepping up even this high efficiency. To the fertilizer interests in all parts of the country all this represents a very real threat. TVA fertilizer is used in twenty-nine states under the guidance of land-grant colleges. Forty thousand farmers have already demonstrated on over five million acres that yields can be increased 30 per cent by crop rotation and the use of phosphates of high plant-food content.

These experiments have aroused so much interest that in Montana, where there are large deposits of phosphate rock, a strong movement has emerged to get Bonneville to build a dam at Hungry Horse with which to power the manufacture of the new type of fertilizer. The forces opposing public power and cheap fertilizer came in with a rush to block this proposal. The Montana Power Company, which has made a nice thing of its monopoly of electric power in the inter-mountain area, protested vehemently against the whole idea—for two reasons: Montana Power wants no competition from public power in its domain; and Montana Power is controlled by the Anaconda Copper Company, which is a large producer of the regular commercial type of phosphate fertilizer. No clearer illustration of how interlocking monopoly ownership operates to restrict industrial and agricultural development could be imagined.

Millions of farmers want fertilizer; the security of the country, Secretary Anderson said, depends on its greater use. But the private-power interests are fighting for the maintenance of the rigged fertilizer set-up. The entire country is menaced, but the Tennessee Valley is most aware of it. Here people know the stakes. They have seen the Valley progress from primitive agriculture through the electrical age. Now it is on the threshold of the atomic age. Better than any other section of the country, the Valley knows that if the production of fertilizer and electricity go under private control, the production of atomic energy will also, and then every dream of industrial democracy will be shattered.

There is strength in the Valley to fight these threats to its future. The 138 municipally owned power companies and farmers' electrical cooperatives have been tempered in previous assaults upon the TVA. They will have the support of the newspapers and the chambers of commerce of the towns which have benefited from the Valley's development; and the growing trade-union movement is taking up its share of the load.

They will win—with the country's help—and the issue on which they will win is as real as the power bloc's talk of collectivism is phony.

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# *Del Vayo*—Perón on the March

MAY 21 will remain a memorable date in the history of the Western Hemisphere. Crossing the frontiers of his own country, President Perón has set out to become the Führer of Latin America. Like every dictator of his type, he considers himself a man of destiny. His destiny is to unite all the countries south of the Rio Grande under the leadership of Argentina. The dream of a Latin American League that inspired the Congress of Panamá in 1826 is constantly working in his mind. Certainly he lacks the stature of the initiator of that idea—"the man who freed one continent and filled another with his name," as the children in the schools of Paris described Bolívar 125 years ago. But Perón possesses ambition and skill and even that fascination for the masses that throughout Latin American history has won for dictators a certain popular complicity.

His fascism has several original traits, and one can almost understand his unwillingness to appear a mere pupil of the European dictators of the thirties. But it has in common with German and Italian fascism the tendency to dominate beyond its own domain. "The revolution that does not expand dies in time and space," said General Perón last fall, in true Hitlerian style. His initial step in affirming this view was his meeting last week with President Dutra of Brazil.

Not much about that conference will come to the surface except general phrases about its symbolic importance. But whether acknowledged or not, it was the first act in the creation of a pan-American military bloc with Argentina as its center. This is a scheme that would never have had a chance of becoming a reality if the United States had not given Perón the green light by admitting Argentina to the United Nations at San Francisco. Now, thanks to that suicidal move, Argentina has become too strong diplomatically to be pushed around. In spite of the courageous but unsupported resistance of Mr. Braden, Perón already has in his pocket the key to the next pan-American conference. But this is not enough. He wants to appear there at the head of his own bloc and in a position to speak to the United States at least as equal to equal.

The movement began months ago. It first took the form of economic penetration. Chile, in spite of having elected as President a genuine anti-fascist and progressive, Gabriel Gonzales Videla, was in an extremely difficult situation. Having obtained little help from the United States, it was compelled last December to sign a trade and financial treaty with Argentina which increased Chile's dependence on its powerful neighbor and is beginning to influence its political life. To win Bolivia, which had partly slipped out of Perón's clutches through the last revolution, Argentina offered to buy as much tin as Bolivia wanted to sell at the price (76 cents a pound) La Paz was trying vainly to get from the United States and Great Britain. Bolivia was drawn back into the Argentina system. Uruguay needed financing for big hydro-electric projects; Argentina was ready with the money.

Benefiting from its neutrality in the war, which not only relieved the country of heavy military expenditures but insured an uninterrupted market for its goods in both Axis and Allied nations, Argentina today is able to extend much-needed favors to its poorer neighbors.

Perón's happiest hour arrived when President Truman announced his policy of general resistance to the encroachments of communism. Franco in Europe, Perón in Argentina became volunteers in the great democratic mobilization. As a fellow-member of the United Nations, Perón's value as an ally, and even as possible leader of a continental coalition, is very evident. I have not verified the rumors of an impending conference of American chiefs of staff at Rio, preliminary to the long-postponed pan-American conference and designed to lay the groundwork for what is called a "continental army." But in Argentina there is little doubt that should such a scheme materialize, the nucleus of the continental force would be the Argentine army. Undoubtedly the best-trained and equipped in Latin America, accustomed to the task of repressing Argentina's own anti-fascists, trained by German Nazi officers, it would provide an effective instrument in the fight against communism.

To make this proposal more digestible to Americans who are addicted to the philosophy of the four freedoms, Sumner Welles, like other defenders of "continental solidarity," rejects the very idea that "this government should impose its own views as to the kind of representative government other independent and sovereign peoples should enjoy." But no talk about representative government can make Perón's regime anything other than pure fascism. Identifying himself as the champion of Argentina's "shirtless ones," Perón, as the report of the A. F. of L. commission to Argentina conclusively established, has liquidated the whole independent labor movement—former Congressman Rodriguez Araya, who dared expose the government's frauds, was shot in the back. In the nation's six universities 1,500 professors and instructors have been dismissed. Catholic study in the schools has been imposed by a special law. Anti-Semitism is increasing. The Congress has been made an instrument of the President-Dictator. The Supreme Court too. Habeas corpus still exists, but mainly for the benefit of certain Nazi personalities whom the United States wanted to have deported. Those who have recently been sent back to Germany are belated offerings on the altar of hemispheric solidarity.

In itself the idea of a free union of Latin American countries to resist imperialist pressure or subjugation to foreign capital is a tempting one. The trouble is that progress toward continental unity is taking place under the sign of reaction, with a fascist state in the lead. The incorporation of Latin America in the crusade against Russian totalitarianism and Communist infiltration will only result in the strengthening of a Latin American totalitarianism. American liberals who honestly want democracy and hate fascism should realize that the new foreign policy they have accepted, however reluctantly, will force upon them the role of fellow-travelers of Franco and Perón in the fantastic enterprise of destroying democracy in the name of democracy.

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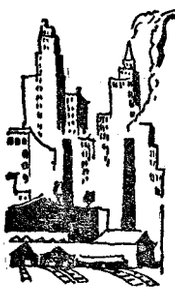

# EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

## Bridging the Trade Gap

IN HIS recent speech at Cleveland, Mississippi, retiring Under Secretary of State Dean Acheson referred to "a disparity between production in the United States and production in the rest of the world that is staggering in its proportions." Here, even though the pace shows signs of slackening, we are still turning out goods at a rate far in excess of any previous peace-time year. In large parts of Europe and Asia production remains much below normal, thanks to war-time destruction and dislocation and, in the former continent, to a series of "acts of God" in the shape of droughts, storms, excessive cold, and floods.

One result of this disparity is the dangerously lopsided state of American foreign trade. Figures just released by the Department of Commerce show that in the first quarter of this year our exports of goods and services totaled $4.9 billion while our imports of foreign goods and services were only $1.9 billion. Assuming a flow of trade at the same rate for the rest of this year, this would mean exports of $19.6 billion and imports of $7.9 billion, and a difference between payments in and payments out of $12 billion. How is so vast a gap to be bridged? In a forecast published earlier in the year the Department of Commerce estimated the size of this gap at $7.2 billion. American loans and gifts to foreign countries, it is believed, would cover $5.8 billion of this sum, and the balance of $1.4 billion would be met from foreign reserves of gold and dollars.

Clearly, unless the trade trends of the first quarter are sharply reversed, the whole basis of this calculation is destroyed. In the absence of additional loans and gifts from the United States, foreign countries, in order to sustain their present excess purchases of American goods, would have to deplete their reserves to the extent of $5.9 billion altogether. But these reserves amount to only $17.5 billion —they have declined by a round billion in the past twelve months—and they are very unevenly distributed. Switzerland and South Africa, for instance, have ample supplies of gold and dollars in relation to their needs, while British, French, and Dutch reserves are dangerously low.

Speaking in Philadelphia on May 19, Thomas C. Blaisdel, Assistant Secretary of Commerce, said the obvious meaning of the growing trade gap was that "in 1947 either exports must be cut drastically, or imports must increase by 50 per cent, or additional loans must be made."

Current United States exports to Europe and Asia consist very largely of necessities—grain, cotton, coal, steel, transport equipment, machinery, and so forth. Any serious curtailment in their volume must entail either shorter rations or slower reconstruction or both in the importing countries. Moreover, we have to consider the effects of a sharp reduction in exports on the American economy. Until recently the tremendous home demand for goods of all kinds has overshadowed the role of exports in maintaining production. But now that the sellers' market is ending and domestic orders in some lines have fallen off, foreign customers are of increasing importance to American industry and agriculture. Certainly a sharp cut in exports would accelerate the recession which most economists believe is in the making. We must consider, too, the effect on American prestige of a marked fall in our production while other countries are still afflicted by acute shortages. As Chester Bowles's Committee on Economic Stability points out, "It would be nothing short of criminal to permit unemployment of men and factories to develop here in the face of desperate needs abroad."

The most satisfactory solution to the problem of the gap would be an increase in imports from foreign countries. To some extent the American tariff is an obstacle, but at this time it is believed that the chief reason for the lag in imports is the sheer inability of many countries to ship more goods abroad than they are now doing. In an effort to improve their trade positions and reduce the necessity for further American loans, Britain and other countries are forcing exports to the utmost, depriving their own people of badly needed commodities. But until the reconstruction and modernization of industry has proceeded farther they cannot hope to sell to America the equivalent of what they need to buy.

What of the third alternative, a substantial addition to the large amount of credit which the United States has furnished to the world in the last two years? A very astute business man whom I know, a leader in his field, has recently prepared a memorandum advocating the foreign lending of $10 billion a year for at least five years. He points out that such a program, apart from its political significance as a means of laying the economic foundations for a peaceful world, would provide a practical guaranty of sustained full production in this country. He believes that most loans would be repaid, but argues that in any case we should still be getting value for our money. Ten billion dollars is rather less than 5 per cent of present near-capacity production, and, my friend asks, what business man would not pay a 5 per cent commission to insure all-out operation of his plant?

It may be said that the United States has already poured out enormous sums in foreign aid. This is true, but the fact is that, unscathed ourselves by war, we have greatly underestimated its economic consequences in the countries that were battlefields. The job our dollars have performed so far is mainly one of relief. We have kept Europe alive, but if it is to proceed from bare sustenance to a moderate degree of prosperity, we shall have to underwrite its reconstruction. This means a sustained program instead of haphazard, last-minute rescue operations, and one directed purposefully toward the increase of productivity and the development of idle resources. Both American producers of the capital goods that will be needed and the foreign nations that will purchase them must be given an opportunity to plan ahead. As so conservative a mouthpiece of business as *Barron's* wrote recently, in the course of an editorial advocating more foreign lending, "Much as we may deplore it, intelligent policy planning on an over-all national and international level has become essential."

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# BOOKS *and the* ARTS

## Dialogue of a Dilemma

*(Scene: The Elysian fields. It is eternal spring. Herodotus and Aristophanes are having a peripatetic conversation.)*

*Herodotus.* I have just finished a book by one of my able successors, William Hardy McNeill.* It looks as if there is much trouble in our native land.

*Aristophanes.* What, the Persians again?

*Herodotus.* No, it's more like Athens and Sparta. Furthermore, the inhabitants of Atlantis, which Poseidon raised from the ocean, are anxious to stop communism and to restore democracy.

*Aristophanes.* As I remember, our democracy was destroyed more than 2,000 years ago. And there was little democracy in the Byzantine or Ottoman empire and not much more under the Bavarian *tyrannos* Otho, his German successors, or the dictators Metaxas and Pangalos.

*Herodotus.* That's true, but did not the British, after defeating the E. L. A. S., instal the democratic Papandreou government?

*Aristophanes.* They certainly did. But, you see, this democrat in some respects resembled Cleon, whom I assailed in "The Knights," and in others resembled Alcibiades.

*Herodotus.* How do you mean?

*Aristophanes.* Well, as you know, Alcibiades, after having been dishonored as a politician in Athens, became a general, first in Sparta and then in Persia, and was recalled and made an admiral by Athens. Papandreou started as a liberal, turned Social Democrat, flirted with the E. A. M., and was a premier of the Government of National Unity, which eventually developed into a disguised dictatorship. History repeats itself—of course with slight differences. Byron in 1822 helped the Greek insurgents to conquer Athens, and in 1944 Winston Churchill, with the British army, helped to drive the Greek E. L. A. S. from Athens.

*Herodotus.* When you read McNeill's clear-sighted, impartial book you will see that the situation is not so simple as merely the betrayal of democracy. This American historian, who by the way was for two crucial years assistant military attaché in Athens and is certainly no fellow-traveler, gives us a complete picture of the resistance movement, the civil war, and the ensuing reaction. I wish the Truman doctrinaires could have read this amazingly lucid, factual narrative before putting their "theory" into practice.

*Aristophanes.* You mean he says it was not just a fight between Communists and Democrats, the E. L. A. S. and the E. D. E. S.?

*Herodotus.* Certainly not, unless we indulge in the oversimplification of calling "red" or "fascist" everyone who is not in our camp. Originally every patriotic Greek supported the E. A. M. and the E. L. A. S., the National People's Liberation Army created by uniting the separate bands, the E. K. K. A., P. A. O. X., and other alphabetic combinations, into one guerrilla force which the most prominent military figures joined. The trouble began, indeed, when the British, in order to obtain the return of the King, sent enough equipment and gold for 15,000 men, to provide for the E. D. E. S. of General Zervas. This estranged all liberals and leftists.

*Aristophanes.* Is E. D. E. S. not short for Greek Democratic National League and is the guerrilla leader Zervas not a democrat? True, he was once commander of the bodyguard of the dictator Pangalos, but in betraying his master he became a democrat, and he recognized the Papandreou government. As I wrote in "The Frogs," "he was easy there, is easy here."

*Herodotus.* Whatever the democratic convictions of "Papa" Zervas, we are told by McNeill that the E. D. E. S. had no popular support, only that of the British, and that "Zervas's strength never approached that of E. L. A. S." It was, indeed, a case of nationalistic antagonisms "entangled with ideological struggles." In the elections of 1945, which the Popular Party won—though only 49 per cent of the electors voted and even so the royalists won but 231 seats out of 354—the party, McNeill says, "often advocated measures that could plausibly be called fascist." Now when we learn that Americans want to reconcile the government supporters and the guerrillas, perhaps we should keep in mind McNeill's belief that "institutions of Western democracy hardly fitted the social and political situation in which Greece found itself."

*Aristophanes.* As you know, I wrote the often-quoted sentence: "Who has brought the owl to Athens?" Democracy is no commodity to be imported, and in Greece, too, it must grow out of the native soil. But is this fight between the army and the guerrillas or, as some people prefer to call them, the Communists, not just a new *Batrachomyomachia,* a battle between frogs and mice? After all the army numbers 146,000 men and the bands at most a few thousands.

*Herodotus.* Number alone does not matter. Greek reactionary and Slav revolutionary are, as McNeill puts it, "an explosive mixture." Slavic peasants, in this case the Macedonians, have for many centuries had a tradition of guerrilla action. Don't forget what Philip of Macedon used to say: "The Macedonians are uncouth and boorish, and call a tub a tub." This is why they are not inclined to call the Maximos government democratic.

*Aristophanes.* So according to your American colleague the prerequisites of democracy are lacking. But is not the Truman doctrine aiming to create them?

*Herodotus.* The way to Hades is always paved with good intentions. As McNeill so convincingly proves, the crux of the Greek problem is overpopulation. This could be alleviated by considerably increasing the immigration quota to the United States and by a program of industrialization—which would, however, require an enormous expenditure. This paltry $300,000,000 would be but a drop in the bucket even if the whole amount were used to build up industries instead of to support a warfare of which no doctrinaire can foretell the end. It is a pity they have not read in my histories that "he acts most wisely who makes his plans with caution, recognizing that any untoward event may occur."

*Aristophanes.* How do you expect politicians to read your histories, which

* "The Greek Dilemma: War and Aftermath." J. B. Lippincott Company. $3.50.

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are commonly despised as "philosophy"? I wish they would read "The Greek Dilemma" instead. This might perhaps avert the dress rehearsal of World War III with Greece in the role of Spain—though at least Franco did not have American aid. You know the proverb: When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war. I wonder if it makes a difference when one of the Greeks is American. RUSTEM VAMBERY

## An Epic Game

*BEHIND THE SILKEN CURTAIN.* By Bartley C. Crum. Simon and Schuster. $3.

THE United Nations Assembly is preparing to send out another, the nineteenth, commission to investigate the problem of Palestine—one of the world's most vexing and ominous headaches. It is therefore both timely and instructive to learn what happened to the previous commission. Bartley C. Crum, a San Francisco lawyer and American member of that body, tells its story in revealing if not complete detail, with many illuminating personal touches; and the public will be lucky if the next batch of investigators includes such a frank reporter.

The Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on Palestine, consisting of six Britons and six Americans (including Mr. Crum), was appointed by the British and American governments in December of 1945. Its purpose was to examine the situation of the European Jews and their need for emigration; to survey the political, economic, and social conditions of Palestine; and consequently to determine how best to accommodate the rights and claims of Jews and Arabs in a final settlement of the status of Palestine. The committee concluded its five months' study just one year ago. Its report was shelved, its recommendations were ignored, and it is now as though it never had existed. Mr. Crum calls its fate "one of the scandals of this post-war period." Yet his own account of how the committee worked and of the forces that undermined it emerges from the wreckage as a beacon for the future—a beacon that throws a penetrating light on the power politics which in every quarter of the globe makes peace impossible and if unchecked will make another world war inevitable. Behind the silken curtain which Mr. Crum found conveniently draped before every corridor that could lead to unpleasant facts or hopeful conclusions sounded the rustlings of fear, greed, and chicanery that might well be the death rattle of civilization.

Mr. Crum introduces his eleven fellow-members to us as one might introduce the characters of a novel. Anecdotes and suggestive snatches of talk acquaint us with men who, however competent in their own field, were—with one exception—innocent of any knowledge of the peoples whose fate they were to consider or an understanding of the conditions in Palestine they were expected to alter. Lacking this knowledge or understanding, they were free to indulge their native genius for speculation and prejudgment. The composition of the committee was in fact what one might expect from the nature of the governments that created it. The British members, selected by a government that had brought Palestinian affairs to a crisis and was seeking to throw the blame for this


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crisis upon the momentarily obstreperous element in the Palestinian population, were—again with one exception—anti-Jewish. The American members, appointed by a government unwilling to reveal its Middle East policy, if indeed it had one, were on the whole either impartial out of indifference or pro Jewish as a matter of sentiment. Yet despite the prevalence of purely emotional attitudes to the very last, the integrity of the committee members was such that its recommendations were indorsed by a unanimous vote. For basic honesty and an ability to adjust diverse opinions no better committee is likely to be constituted. That their work was sabotaged from the start and destroyed in the end by the forces of power politics as embodied in Washington and London makes it clear how useless it will be for the public to scrutinize any new committee or be concerned with how it functions. If we are wise we shall ignore the puppets who are now about to dance before a silken curtain under U. N. management and, instead, follow with our eyes the strings that lead to the master showmen backstage.

At the outset these showmen revealed their hand to Mr. Crum. In Washington, before the investigation even got under way, Loy Henderson, chief of the Near East Division of the State Department, buttonholed Mr. Crum. "He took me aside and told me, 'There is one fact facing both the United States and Great Britain, Mr. Crum. That is the Soviet Union. It would be wise to bear that in mind when you consider the Palestine problem.' " The same view was conveyed to Mr. Crum by a British representative of the Foreign Office aboard the boat which took the committee to England—a representative who followed the committee in Europe, reiterating this view, and who managed to turn up in Lausanne, with the identical view, when the committee sat down to formulate their recommendations.

On the boat Mr. Crum was vouchsafed his fullest glimpse of what happens behind the curtain. He was given a résumé of the State Department's secret file on Palestine—"the existence of which," suggests Mr. Crum, "apparently not even President Truman had known." In sum, its seventeen items proved that since 1938 "each time a promise was made to American Jewry regarding Palestine, the State Department promptly sent messages to the Arab rulers discounting it and reassuring them, in effect, that regardless of what was promised publicly to the Jews, nothing would be done to change the situation in Palestine." At this point Mr. Crum adds that up to the publication of his book the State Department has not refuted the authenticity of these items or his charge that it was sabotaging American public policy. In other words, the real but secret policy of the United States government with respect to Palestine coincided with the real but secret policy of the British government. It was the policy succinctly expressed by the ubiquitous British representative of the Foreign Office when he told Mr. Crum that "the United States would do well to join Britain in establishing a *cordon sanitaire* of Arab states [against Russia]" and that "if Palestine were declared an Arab state, it would be a strong link in this chain."

These revelations rather amused the British members of the committee. Sir John Singleton—a judge of the King's Bench—set things straight. " 'Really the Jews are not the most important factor at all,' he said. 'The important thing is Anglo-American cooperation. Since these promises of yours [to the Arabs] have put both nations in the dock together, it only serves to bring us closer in the world ahead.' " In a way unmeant by his cynicism, Sir John was right. As evidenced by their behavior even more than by their words or secret files, the American and British governments do not consider the Jews an important factor. And as evidenced by the contrast between the public promises of the Labor Party in England and the Democratic Administration and Party in America and their public actions as well as inaction with respect to the Jews of Palestine, the American and British governments are truly "in the dock together."

From this episode, as indeed from all the cloak-and-dagger stuff, secret shenanigans, and false-witnessing which are recorded by the candid Mr. Crum, one crucial inference is unmistakable. The United Nations commission which is to duplicate the work of Mr. Crum and his fellows will not and cannot reach a just or abiding solution of the Palestine problem unless the British and American governments are put in the dock and their case sifted and tried with the same impartial probing as the case of the Jews and the Arabs. The world—the American people above all—are entitled to an inquiry which will answer a few questions. What is the actual policy of the American Department of State in the Middle East—and why? What are its commercial as well as its political aims? Why—whether for the sake of oil, politics, or whatever reason—is the American government willing to deprive American manufacturers of large markets in the Middle East by perpetuating Arab feudalism and consenting to a British near-monopoly of those markets? What is the actual policy of the British Foreign Office; and under what conditions and for what ends is Britain to be allowed a permanent military base in Palestine? And what are the intentions and purposes of the Soviet Union in the Middle East? The American people are entitled to get the most accurate answers possible from the best sources available, for it is they who are now supporting both the British and American governments with their money, and it is they who may be called upon to support them with their blood.

On the surface, the Jews in Palestine and Europe are an important factor only to themselves. Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union are playing a game in which the Jews are the ball. And when a game is played, it is always the ball that is hit. The game, however, is an epic one; and when the final score comes in, it will be found that the stakes are world war or peace. In this larger and truer aspect of the game, the Jews of Palestine and the scores of thousands more who must go there and help build a democratic, industrialized, and modern bulwark or else die of desuetude in the D. P. camps of Europe are more than a football or a pawn. It is they—and our attitude toward them—that will determine the final score.

*Mr. Crum, in his conclusions, shows* an eloquent understanding of the issue. "We can throw our lot," he states, "in with the forces of reaction who prop up feudalistic regimes in the Arab states in the hope that they will serve as a *cordon sanitaire* against the Soviets. Or we can

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throw our lot in with the progressive forces in the Middle East. . . . I say to my fellow-Americans that not only for the sake of the masses in the Middle East but for the sake of world peace we must encourage this development, a development of which Jewish Palestine is thus far the outstanding example."

The immediate danger, as Mr. Crum came to understand, lies in procrastination—in allowing, under a curtain of secrecy and delay, the present forces which control American and British policy to bolster Arab feudalism, slowly strangle the Western civilization inaugurated by the Jews, and perpetuate the duplicity which eats like a dry rot into the pillars of peace. Mr. Crum was quick to appraise the vileness of the Arab regimes and the misery of the Arab masses; he was quick to appreciate not only the substance but the beauty of what the Jews have accomplished in their small portion of Palestine and its promise of bettering the whole Middle East. He was alert, too, in sniffing out the spying and sabotage to which the committee was subjected. However, he was reluctant to admit—as Einstein told the committee at its first sessions—that its work was a waste of time and would serve only as a smoke screen to cover up an endless delay. Finally he saw the point—the real point of the problem and the book. "We cannot have peace," he concludes, "with a Middle East divided, half fascist, half democratic. Palestine symbolizes the crossroads, not only for our foreign policy, but for the world. Which way shall we choose?"

MARVIN LOWENTHAL

## The Human Story

*THE ANCIENT MAYA.* By Sylvanus Griswold Morley. Stanford University Press. $10.

WHY—the general reader may well ask—why should anyone today take an interest in the ancient Maya? Why give your life to digging the story of a dead civilization from the overgrown ruins of Mexico and Central America? Any popular book on archaeology must deal, at least tacitly, with such questions. That is one reason why writing for the public is so much more exacting than writing for the inner circle of experts. It constitutes, in a sense, a test of the scholar's appreciation of his material—whether he can see it in the perspective of everyday life, appraise its sociological and aesthethic implications, and present it to the average person, not as an odd esoteric preoccupation, but as somehow relevant to his life and his interests.

In this case Jean Charlot's hilarious jacket design is no snare: it implies the lively fascination of the story of pre-Columbian Maya culture. Actually archaeology is not a dry and dead concern; it deals with the record of human life, and Egypt or Yucatan will yield generalizations that help to clarify the meaning of all civilization. This is peculiarly true of the American civilizations. Everything indicates that before the arrival of Europeans this hemisphere had developed quite on its own, without assistance or influence from the rest of the world, and so it serves as a kind of check on the character of human invention. If we find pyramidal structures in Yucatan as well as in Egypt and Babylon, if we find nature gods and animal fables in Mexico as well as in Greece,

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it means, not that Egyptians and Atlanteans have been in Yucatan, but that these are some of the things the mind of man naturally tends to invent. Ways of securing food and shelter, the development of government and social forms of community living, speculation about the nature of the universe (from which religion and philosophy and the sciences spring)—human beings are concerned with these things as naturally as they breathe and sleep. To see how such problems were met by a people which had no wheat and no rice, no Arabs or Romans to borrow numerical systems from, no Phoenicians to hand on an alphabet, is a curious and fascinating study. It may well give us pause to realize that—at the time of the Middle Ages in Europe—the Mayas had the most accurate calendar that had ever been developed in this world. In a way it is the most hopeful observation that can be made about humanity, this tendency to make itself into a civilization, to invent over and over again not only the fortress but the observatory.

Actually Maya culture offers more than a proving ground for cultural speculation. It offers also art—the visual arts of some twelve hundred years of civilization, certainly the finest body of art to come down to us from pre-Columbian America. The sculpture of Quirigua and Copan, or the architecture of Tikal and Uxmal, is worth looking at for its own sake: it can hold its own with the great art of the world. Here is an artistic tradition quite distinct from those we have known, rich in its own particular mood, not only astonishing but aesthetically rewarding.

This volume has been put together with imagination, without skimping, and at a very high level of scholarship. It is not so heavy or so long as it looks, for the type is large and the illustrations frequent. The writing is clear and simple. Every tool for understanding the material has been included: there are maps, charts, and chronologies; there is a good index; and the text itself is constantly clarified by cross-references. Difficult and controversial matters, such as the correlation of the Maya chronology with the Christian calendar, are not shirked but are put out of the way in appendices. It is true that the illustrations hardly convey the high level of quality of the material, but their number and selection are excellent. This is, indeed, the very model of a popular book on a scholarly subject, written by an acknowledged expert, without compromise and without condescension. It is also our first satisfactory opportunity to read one of the most exciting stories in the history of mankind.

ELIZABETH WILDER

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## Art

*CLEMENT GREENBERG*

THEO VAN DOESBURG, the Dutch painter, architect, and designer, was a herald of the new rationalist enlightenment that dawned with the opening of the century and faded away at the approach of Hitler. The close of that period saw Van Doesburg's own early death in 1931 at the age of forty-eight. He was for a time a collaborator of Mondrian's, but whereas Mondrian confined his energies to easel-painting, Van Doesburg extended their common ideas into architecture and interior decoration, for which they were ultimately intended by Mondrian himself. In both fields these ideas now seem somewhat premature, but only because of historical circumstances; they were not premature in easel-painting.

Yet Van Doesburg has been the only one to paint in the same direction as Mondrian with both independence and success. This was made very clear by the recent retrospective show of his paintings and designs at Art of This Century. His gift for painting was such, in fact, that one regrets that he dispersed that gift in other fields and did not concentrate more exclusively on painting. His first cubist efforts, in 1917, already show a crispness and originality that make them much more than promising apprentice pieces. And no less than six of his seven post-1920 canvases at Art of This Century are actually and sufficiently successful—which, if this is a truly representative show, is a phenomenal rate of success, equaled, perhaps, in the twenties only by Mondrian of all the School of Paris.

Van Doesburg did not confine himself to pure or primary colors, and therefore his color is somewhat duller than Mondrian's. Where Mondrian's art is stronger, intenser, more profound, we see in Van Doesburg's a greater openness, not at all the same fanaticism but rather an exuberant doctrinairism. Mondrian, perhaps, foresaw a period that would demand tenacity and fanaticism on the part of the rationalist; Van Doesburg still belonged completely to the open, all-embracing, almost irresponsible hopefulness of the first quarter of our century. *Et ego in Arcadia. . . .*

The Van Doesburg show, incidentally, is the last to be given at the Art of This Century gallery, which will not reopen next season, since Miss Guggenheim plans to transfer her permanent collection of contemporary art to Italy, where she will make her home. Her departure is in my opinion a serious loss to living American art. The erratic gaiety with which Miss Guggenheim promoted "non-realistic" art may have misled some people, as perhaps her autobiography did too, but the fact remains that in the three or four years of her career as a New York gallery director she gave first showings to more serious new artists than anyone else in the country (Pollock, Hare, Baziotes, Motherwell, Rothko, Ray, De Niro, Admiral, McKee, and others). I am convinced that Peggy Guggenheim's place in the history of American art will grow larger as time passes and as the artists she encouraged mature.

Robert Motherwell is among the newer painters who received their first showing at Miss Guggenheim's gallery. At that time—almost three years ago—this writer pointed out Motherwell's promise if not his achievement. Since then I have also pointed out his failure to fulfil that promise. Now, on the occasion of his most recent show, at Samuel Kootz's last month, I have the happier task of saying how well indeed he has, in two or three pictures out of sixteen, begun to live up to it. It is not only a matter of two or three items, but that the general level of his work this year is so much higher than ever before.

The most important reason for this improvement seems to be the shift of emphasis from collage to oil; for the few collages in Motherwell's most recent show betray the same chaos that disastrously characterized the many in his previous ones. The great difference lies

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in the oils. These used to suffer, in their turn, from an absence of ideas and substance; now they body forth in their quasi-geometic purism and accomplished simplicity a quantity of feeling and experience such as one had hardly expected of this artist. It appears as though, for Motherwell, the activity of placing and selecting, as required by collage, could elicit nothing of that indispensable order which art demands of the artist's personality; this, in his case, could be provided only through the activity of drawing on canvas and applying paint. The resistance of the physical stuff itself was needed to produce such a splendid picture as the "Yellow Still Life," which was the best thing in the show. And if the large "Construction" had not been over-painted on gravel, it would perhaps have equaled it. "In Yellow Black" is another canvas that probably would have been completely achieved if there had not been a certain reluctance to trust thin paint, an anxiety about texture and surface.

Motherwell's ambition, which is to simplify and to manipulate the results of the simplification into expression, is one that places him at the very center of all that is serious and ambitious in contemporary painting. The expression is that of a desire for order and rationality, and its success means that the artist has achieved such order and rationality at least for himself.

## Films

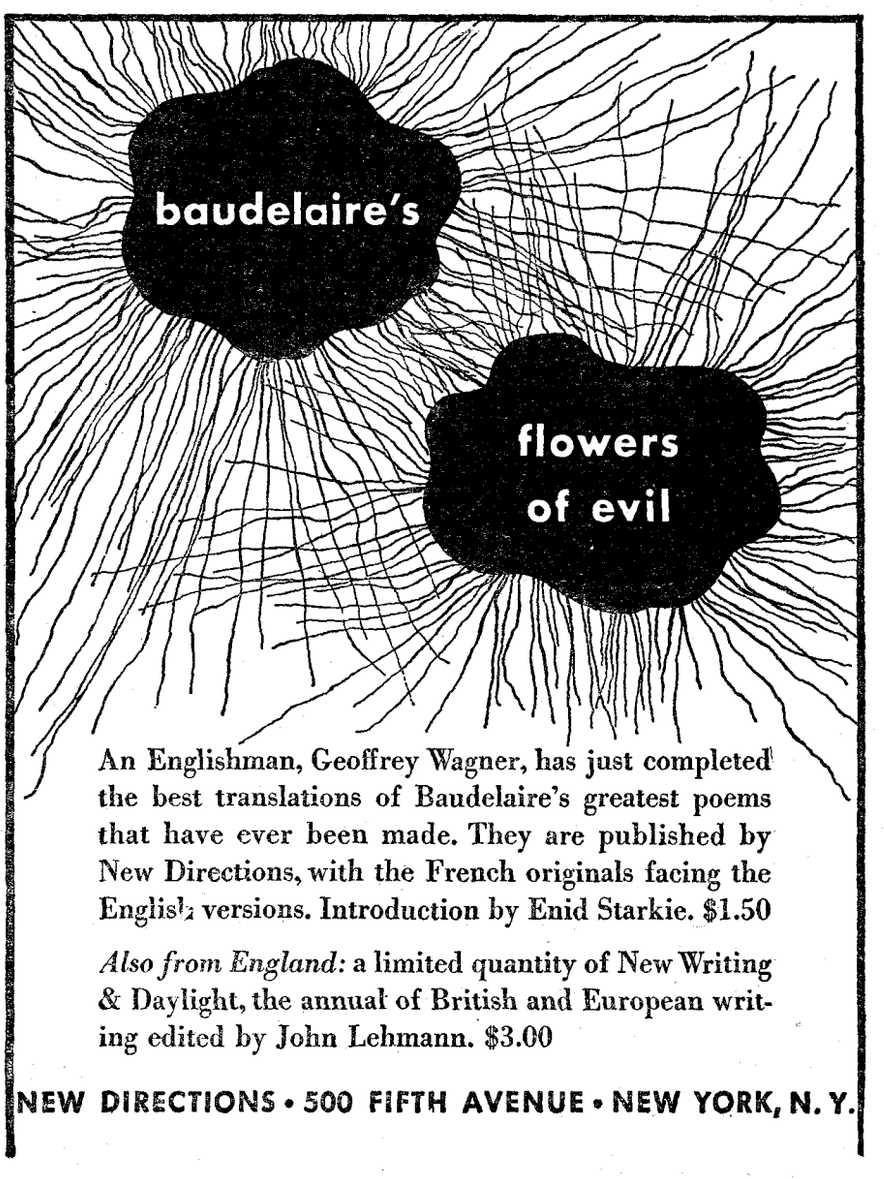
*JAMES AGEE*

ALTHOUGH I have been granted extra space, and propose to discard most other considerations for brevity's sake, I can say here only a few of the things that I feel need to be said about Mr. Chaplin's new film. I can only hope that these notes may faintly suggest the frame-by-frame appreciation, the gratitude, and the tribute which we owe this great poet and his great poem; and may help some readers to enjoy more of what he has done than they otherwise might.

The skeletal story: Henri Verdoux, a French bank teller of the thirties who has lost his job in a depression, works out a business of his own whereby he can support his crippled wife (Mady Corell) and their little boy. He becomes a professional murderer of women of means. He courts them, marries them, finesses their little fortunes into his possession; murders them and eliminates their corpses; plays the market with the whole of his profits. We see him at work on four such women. One is going up in smoke when Verdoux first appears. One is a socially prominent widow (Isobel Elsom) whom he woos industriously through most of the film; she takes him for a boulevardier. One is a sour old small-town dame (Margaret Hoffman) whose money he cajoles by stop-watch and whom he promptly murders; she thinks he is a globe-trotting civil engineer. One is a half-daft ex-tart (Martha Raye) who has hit luck in a lottery. She takes him for a sea captain. His efforts to kill her are almost the only passages of pure slapstick in the film.

A very busy little man—his business dashes him all over France and from top to bottom of society—Verdoux can visit his true home seldom. Even when he does he is likely to mix business with the pleasure. He learns from a druggist friend (Robert Lewis) about a new poison, painless and untraceable. He picks up a friendless young woman (Marilyn Nash) to try it out on, but spares her when he realizes that she, like himself, "could kill for love." When he meets her later, by accident, he cryptically brushes her off. Late in the film, long after he has retired from business, they meet again. But just then and there he is recognized by relatives of a former wife. After showing how effortlessly he could have escaped, he deliberately puts himself in the way of arrest. The film ends with the famous scenes in which Verdoux hears his sentence and explains himself, more or less, to the court and the world; pays his equally cold respects to journalism and to God; and walks to the guillotine.

Disregard virtually everything you may have read about the film. It is of interest, but chiefly as a definitive

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measure of the difference between the thing a man of genius puts before the world and the things the world is equipped to see in it. There is room neither to analyze nor to argue much about this peculiar criticism; yet in all conscience a few points must be mentioned. The ruck of these reviewers have said, for instance, that the film isn't funny; is morally questionable; is in bad taste; that Chaplin should never have stopped playing the tramp; that Raye steals her scenes with Chaplin; that Chaplin is no good at casting, writing, directing, producing; that he should have hired people, for all these jobs, who knew the techniques which have been developed since talkies began. Some brief replies:

*Not funny.* Not much of it is, unless you have an eye and mind for the far from cliché matters which can be probed and illuminated through poetically parodied cliché; an appetite for cold nihilistic irony; respect for an artist who subdues most of his outrageous fun to the grim central spirit of his work.

*Morals.* For later discussion. I could take more seriously those who have objected on these grounds if any of them had shown himself capable of recognizing an act of moral and artistic heroism when he saw it. Not one did.

*Taste.* "Verdoux" is in bad taste if death is, as so many Americans feel; and if it is in bad taste to treat a serious matter seriously, and to make comedy cut to the bone.

*The tramp.* Very young children fiercely object to even minor changes in a retold story. Older boys and girls are not, as a rule, respected for such extreme conservatism.

*Raye.* Verdoux cannot properly get many of the big laughs; that is what Raye is there for. She does her job beautifully, and Chaplin feeds her and foils her beautifully. One of the finest aspects of his miraculous performance is his quiet skill and graciousness, in these and many other scenes, as a feeder, a sardonic ringmaster, an inspired emmcee.

*Casting.* Raye's mere presence disproves that. So does Marilyn Nash; name one trained actress who could give that role, besides her lovely demeanor, her exactly right spirit, vitality, and freshness. So does every player and bit player in the cast. Chaplin is the most perceptive, imaginative, exact man alive, at casting; these reviewers are less so.

*Writing.* Verbally most of "Verdoux" is inferior to its visual achievements—that is to say, it is only one of the most talented screen plays ever written. Chaplin also wrote the story and its sub-


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tleties; designed one of the few really *formed* movies in years; invented at least twenty-five characters who live very keenly both as social types and as individuals; and reproduced, just as cleanly and quietly, that entire grand façade of a society which was germane to his theme. (The significant omissions are farmers and industrial workers; the world of "Verdoux" is the world of gain, gotten ill, by chance, by heritage, by crime.)

*Directing.* He directed this film—all the people mentioned and successes suggested above, and still others as great and greater, handling a munificent complex of characters, ideas, milieux, and tributary styles and tones with all but perfect visual wit and expressiveness and with an all but unblemished grace, force, and economy. For directing as brilliant I refer you to his own "Modern Times" and to Dovschenko's "Frontier"; there has been none since.

*Production.* Is criticized as stingy, and as unlike France. Instead, it is a manifesto against a kind of vulgarity in which Hollywood is drowned—the attempt to disguise emptiness with sumptuousness. It looks hand-made, not machine-turned. Like the casting and acting and directing it is poetic, not naturalistic, though naturalistic elements are finely used poetically. Verdoux's France is a highly intelligent paraphrase, far more persuasive of its place—half in the real world, half in the mind—than most films are of their supposed place, foreign, native, or imaginary.

*New techniques.* They are on the whole weakened derivations from styles developed before sound came, in Russia, Germany, and, in this country, by Chaplin among others; virtually nothing has been done with sound. Such as the new style is, it can be used decently; that is proved by "The Best Years of Our Lives." But in the average well-made movie, such as these reviewers praise, it signifies just this: the art of moving pictures has been so sick, for so long, that the most it can do for itself is to shift unceasingly from one bedsore to the next. Chaplin, by contrast, obviously believes that if you can invent something worth watching, the camera should hold still and clear, so that you can watch it. That is still, and will always be, one of the best possible ways to use a camera; Chaplin is the one great man who still stands up for it.

To be sure, you have to be competent to see what he puts before you; and thanks to the depravities of the latter-day "style," most of us have spoiled eyes. We cannot appreciate swiftness and uninsistence; nor the bracing absence of fancy composition and prettiness; nor Chaplin's genius for "mood" when that is important (the first great shot of Verdoux's closed garden); nor for atmosphere, authenticity, and beauty in mock formlessness (some wonderful loose group shots, full of glass, gravel, gray sky, pale heads, and dark clothing, at the garden party); nor for visual wit (the astoundingly funny long shot of the lake, with the murder boat almost imperceptibly small). We are just smart enough to recognize a cliché; never enough to see how brilliantly a master can use it. So we sneer at Chaplin's frequent use of locomotive wheels, charging ever more desperately across the screen, this way and that, to mark another business trip or return; saying that he tries thus, unimaginatively, to bind together his formless continuity. But in fact these wheels do a lot at once. They are in the best sense economical; they are cumulatively funny; they cumulatively express Verdoux's ever more frantic busyness; and they wind the film up like a tight spring.

*(To be continued)*

# Music

B. H. HAGGIN

NOW I understand: what Gertrude Stein was writing all the time—with those repetitions—was opera librettos!" exclaimed my companion at a performance of Virgil Thomson's "The Mother of Us All." Opera librettos for Virgil Thomson, I would say. In his new work he treats the text in the same unique way as in "Four Saints in Three Acts," and achieves similar delightful and moving results.

"By separating and differentiating the flat repetitions of a Gertrude Stein verbal sequence," I once wrote after a performance of "Four Saints," "Thomson's music articulates and differentiates them, gives them point and even sense; the music also imparts to them its own structure and climax; and its effect is often the most delightful humor. Some of the humor consists in skilful musical pointing up—by the high-lighting of a group of words, the placing of it in relation to its context—of Miss Stein's surprises and irrelevances of juxtaposition; and to these Thomson adds occasional incongruities of his own contriving between words and music—words of little or no sense or weight, music with style and structure of great emotional import and weight. But when such music is given to words like the 'led, said, wed, dead' sequence the result is very moving."

The words of "The Mother of Us All" have less poetic imagery and music, and more rational meaning—on the one hand the meaning of a sentence that is amusingly discontinuous and isolated in its context, like "He digged a pit; he digged it deep; he digged it for his brother," stated by a group of men who march across the stage during the political rally; on the other hand the meaning of a longer train of thought like Jo Loiterer's explanation of how to be funny, or Susan B. Anthony's discourse on the nature of man, with its wonderful insights. But Thomson's method is the same—by which I don't mean that he uses it mechanically; on the contrary, one is delighted by the attentiveness and freshness of attack at moment after moment that produce, so simply and often artlessly, the results that are so witty, so touching, so grand.

In addition to the pleasure from the work there was the pleasure from the beautiful performance staged by John Taras and conducted by Otto Luening, with costumes and sets by Paul du Pont—as part of the third annual festival of contemporary American music at Columbia University.

The opera of last year's festival, Gian-Carlo Menotti's "The Medium," which I heard only recently at the Barrymore Theater, is a rather extraordinary example of the theatrical effectiveness that a sense for the theater can achieve with poor materials. The play as such is not a good play; the music as such is not good music; but each is well-contrived for the other in a combination that is extremely effective. And the work gains by the excellent performance staged by the composer and conducted by Emanuel Balaban, with costumes and sets by Horace Armistead. The curtain-raiser, "The Telephone," a sort of expanded revue-sketch, is very amusing.

One admires Laszlo Halasz's enterprise; but one wishes it were guided by the discrimination that would prevent the waste of a production of rubbish like Giordano's "Andrea Chenier." And one wishes also that it were restrained by a

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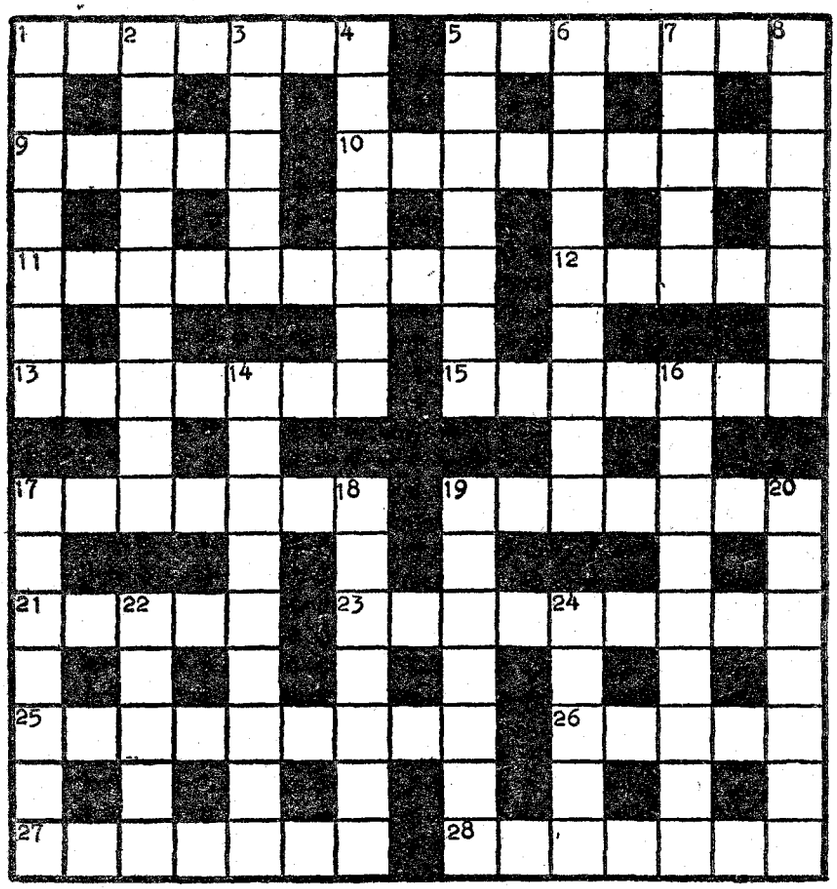
# Crossword Puzzle No. 214

By JACK BARRETT



**ACROSS**

1 Because of *mechanization*, he's *not* as happy as he was
5 Rusty locks (3 & 4)
9 Draftsmen do; draft horse has
10 Not where Marx is studied, but where one studies for marks
11 No peering (anag.)
12 He wrote *Ghosts*, and is now himself one
13 Goods and chattels
15 Set free
17 Flourishing species of laurel (3-4)
19 Not the stuff of your best suit
21 "Small -----, and less Greek"
23 Stable sort of table
25 After what happened you did not go hungry, as it turns out
26 The common man of England
27 Old mare (anag.)
28 Timber cutters (but why the middle letter?)

**DOWN**

1 Release (3 & 4)
2 Small creature with a monstrous head
3 Belgian town
4 The cradle of American civilization?
5 Red orpiment
6 His work is keeping still
7 "Who sees with equal eye, as God of all, A hero perish or a sparrow fall, ----- or systems into ruin hurled, And now a bubble burst, and now a world"
8 There's a man in it—and almost certainly a woman, too!
14 Crowned, in a lesser degree
16 Part of the A B C of butchering?
17 What more could Adam do, seeing his wife had embraced a deceit?
18 You can get a ripe ham from him
19 "Men, my brothers, men the -------, ever reaping something new"
20 Becomes more profound
22 An inheritor comes to tea
24 "Thus adorned, the two heroes, 'twist shoulder and -----, Shook hands and went to it; and the word it was bilbow"

**SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 213**

ACROSS:—1 HICCUPS; 5 POTSHOT; 9 BOUNDEN; 10 NONSUIT; 11 ONCER; 12 ESCALATOR; 14 RENO; 15 ENGINES; 18 SOS; 20 GAS; 21 TAUNTON; 23 SEER; 26 REFECTORY; 28 TENON; 29 INITIAL; 30 ACONITE; 31 GASPERS; 32 KITTENS.

DOWN:—1 HOBNOB; 2 CRUTCH; 3 UNDERWENT; 4 SAN REMO; 5 PANACHE; 6 TONAL; 7 HAUNTING; 8 TUTORESS; 13 BOA; 16 GREATCOAT; 17 EAT; 18 STARLING; 19 SURFEITS; 22 NOODLES; 23 SKYLARK; 24 ENDIVE; 25 UNLESS; 27 CHIDE.

sense of reality—of the realities of New York City Center that make it impossible to stage a work like Strauss's "Salome" properly (I am assuming the limitations of the City Center stage were responsible for the set that lacked the cistern from which Jokanaan should ascend and into which he should descend again, and from which the arm of the executioner should thrust the silver charger with Jokanaan's head). The musical performance conducted by Mr. Halasz seemed to me excellent—with superb singing of the title role by Brenda Lewis. I speak as one who doesn't know the score; and I therefore mention one German conductor's opinion that the performance was "ohful: the orchestra was sometimes five bars separated from the voice"; but I should add that this conductor once said of a Toscanini performance of Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 2—the one with the impossibly high trumpet part—that "fifty prozent was left out, twenty-five prozent was falsch, and the rest was all right," and that I am inclined, therefore, to trust my own impression of the performance of "Salome."

## Letters to the Editors

### Ought to Be a Law

*Dear Sirs: The Nation* recently printed an article by me entitled We Need a Better Housing Bill. The *New Masses* of May 20 contained an article on Palestine signed by a "Charles Abrams." I am not that person, have never written for the *New Masses*, and am sure the *New Masses* will never want me to write for it. CHARLES ABRAMS

New York, May 20

### The Old Dilemma

*Dear Sirs:* I want to comment briefly on the letter by Katherine Anne Porter printed last week in *The Nation*. It was an interesting plea for a more energetic attitude on the part of American liberals. But I must confess I cannot quite make out what Miss Porter wants liberals to do—how much suppression of the far left and far right she thinks they should stand for. She seems to approve of Togliatti's severe measures for the defense of the republic mentioned in a recent article by Del Vayo, although she challenges Togliatti's good faith in proposing them and if she had her way would apply them to him as well as to the conspirators of the right.

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In the United States she apparently advocates a mild version of the same theory; she would jail, or at least fire from government jobs, fascists and Communists in order to save our democracy from subversion. But what she fails to explain is how we are to accomplish this without ourselves instituting laws which would subvert our democracy; without, in fact, finding ourselves, as in paragraph one she fears we soon may do, "with a subversive-thoughts law on our books." PERCIVAL BAXTER

New York, May 23

## The Net Profit Is Less

*Dear Sirs:* I have difficulty in reconciling two statements appearing in the issue of May 3, 1947.

On page 501 you comment upon statements by President Earl Bunting of the N. A. M. that an increase of 15 cents an hour in wages will cost industry $4,058,000,000. You say, "It is absurd to deduct the cost of wage increases from net profits; obviously they are a charge against gross earnings, and the effect on net is much less severe than Mr. Bunting indicated."

On page 503, with reference to Harold Ruttenberg's remarks in *Life,* you say that "an increased steel price of $1,750,000,000 annually, . . . would be extra profit for the steelmasters."

In the first instance you state that an increase in costs would not reduce profits by a corresponding amount, and in the second instance that an increase in selling price would increase profits by a corresponding amount.

In the interests of objective thinking, don't you believe that further comment is necessary? H. L. VAN HORN

Wayne, Pa., May 8

[We confess that we slipped in commenting on Mr. Ruttenberg's proposal. We should have written that an increase of a penny a pound in the price of steel would add $1,700,000,000 to *gross profits*. After the tax-collector had taken his 38 per cent cut, only $1,054,000,000 would remain as extra *net profit*.—EDITORS THE NATION.]

## Transatlantic Exchange

*Dear Sirs:* I wonder if any of your readers would care to exchange his read copy of *The Nation* for my read copy of the *New Statesman*. If so, I should be very glad to have his address. Mine is 17, Forest Court, Snaresbrook, E. 11. P. DENNIS GOODALL

Snaresbrook, England, May 10


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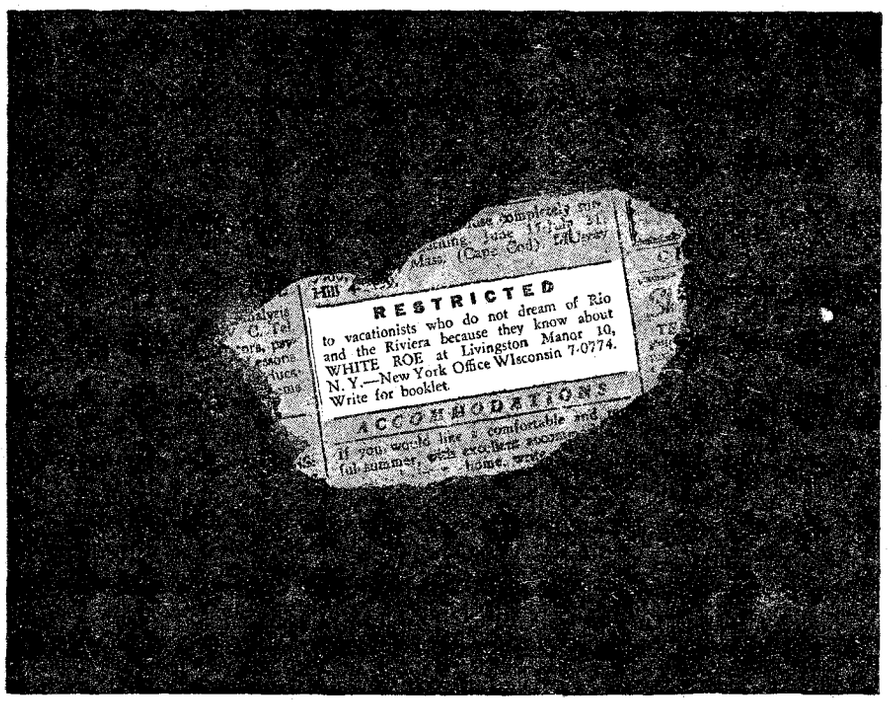
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